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September 1923

The Third Round

Bulldog Drummond's Most Exciting Adventures

By H. C. McNeile

Seven Short Stories

America Disarmed!

A Grave National Problem Revealed by

Herbert B. Mayer

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Volume 55 Number 7

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

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IN McCLURE'S NEXT MONTH

Seven Thrilling Short Stories of Mystery, Love and Adventure

And Five Important News Articles, Including:

The Farmer at the Crossroads

WITH wheat at less than a dollar a bushel, and the farmers' discontent showing itself in such ways as the election to the United States Senate of Magnus Johnson, radical candidate in Minnesota on the Farmer-Labor ticket, one of the gravest problems affecting the welfare of the entire nation has been brought into the spotlight of public discussion.

For the October McCLURE'S O. M. Kile has written an extraordinarily informative article on the agricultural crisis. Must American farmers be forced down to the level of the European peasant? Will the United States cease to be a self-supporting nation? As we turn to other lands for the foodstuffs we no longer pay our own farmers to supply, will we follow in the fatal path that the Roman Empire trod, when the destruction of her agricultural prosperity paved the way for her downfall?

No well informed reader should miss Mr. Kile's illuminating discussion of the issues involved and remedies proposed in this gravest of current national problems.

Raiding a Gotha Lair at Night

A TRUE story, never before told, of the exploit of two daredevil British airmen who, during the latter part of the war, engaged in a thrilling chase of German bombers on their way back from a raid on London. This account of how the disastrous raids on London were temporarily checked by a madcap free-lance enterprise is the first of a series of articles by Major "Tom" Vigors in which are revealed nighttime exploits of the Allied air warriors hitherto kept a profound secret from the public at large. "Major Vigors" is the pen name of one of the most adventurous and successful of the British night fliers.

Eddie Arrives

READERS of McCLURE'S still recall with delight L. H. Robbins' amusing tale "A Good Car for the Money." Mr. Robbins has written for a future McCLURE'S another story marked by the same delightful vein of humor, and enlivened by an absorbing love story as well. "EDDIE ARRIVES" is a drama of small town politics in which the lovable, spoiled son of the local banker fights the local political gang to a standstill.

White Slippers

CHARLTON LAWRENCE EDHOLM has let his fancy play with old days of romance in a southern seaport, where sailors from far corners of the globe gathered to gamble and make love. His Lady of the White Slippers and the sailor who found her trapped in a den of thieves play parts in a romance of exotic glamour.

Soldier Faces and a Legacy

ZOE BECKLEY, writing of the new miracles of plastic surgery, devised during the war to restore the shattered features of the wounded, describes the recent application of this wonderful technique to the restoration of feminine beauty lost through accident or age. It is a fascinating article on a subject never before adequately presented to the public. The use of high explosives in the late war inflicted upon thousands of soldiers facial injuries of the most horrible nature. The masterly technique by which surgeons gave them complete new countenances is described by Miss Beckley as little short of magic.

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He paused a moment. Then his slightly stooped shoulders straightened.

"But it's not too late to begin again," he declared. "And this time I'm going to start right. That's why I sent in the coupon and asked you to call. . . . But what a world of difference it would have made to me," he concluded, "if I had acted six years ago, instead of putting it off till now!"

Alexander Hamilton Institute, Limited, C.P.R. Bldg., Toronto
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Haven't *you* put it off long enough?

FOR SOME TIME, probably, you have been hearing about the Alexander Hamilton Institute, and what it has done for so many men. Perhaps, like the man whose true story you have just read—we have withheld his name only to protect his pride—you have even torn out a coupon, and then you "just put if off."

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To Illustrate "The Third Round"

"I was foolish enough to threaten the professor and he rose abruptly from the table. I cursed myself for a fool"

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No. 7

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE
S. S. McCLURE, *Editor*
KENNETH W. PAYNE, *Managing Editor*

SEPTEMBER
1923

The Author of "The Black Gang" Hits the Bull's-eye Again In—

The Third Round

Another Intensely Exciting "Bulldog" Drummond Adventure

By Major H. C. McNeile

Illustrations by Marshall Frantz

WITH a sigh of pleasure, Mr. Edward Blackton opened the windows of his balcony and leaned out, staring over the lake. Opposite, the mountains of Savoy rose steeply from the water: away to the left the Dents du Midi raised its crown of snow above the morning haze.

Below him the waters of the lake glittered and scintillated with a thousand fires. A steamer, with much blowing of sirens and reversing of paddle wheels, had come to rest at a landing stage hard by, and was taking on board a bevy of tourists, while the gulls circled around, shrieking discordantly. For a while he watched them idly, noting the quickness with which the birds swooped and caught the bread as it was thrown into the air, long before it reached the water. He noted also how nearly all the food was secured by half a dozen of the gulls, while the others said a lot, but got nothing. And suddenly Mr. Edward Blackton smiled.

"Like life, my dear," he said, slipping his arm round the waist of a girl who had just joined him at the window. "It's the fool who shouts in this world: the wise man says nothing and acts."

The girl lit a cigarette thoughtfully, and sat down on the ledge of the balcony. For a while her eyes followed the steamer puffing fussily away with its load of sightseers, and its attendant retinue of gulls: then she looked at the man standing beside her. Point by point she took him in: the clear blue eyes under the deep forehead, the aquiline nose, the firm mouth and chin. Calmly, dispassionately, she noted the thick brown hair graying a little over the temples, the great depth of chest, the strong powerful hands: then she turned and looked once again at the disappearing steamer. But, to the man's surprise she gave a little sigh.

"What is it, my dear?" he said solicitously. "Bored?"

"No, not bored," she answered. "Whatever may be your failings, *mon ami*, boring me is not one of them. I was just wondering what it would feel like, if you and I were content to go on a paddle-wheel steamer with a Baedeker and a kodak, and a paper bag full of bananas."

"We will try tomorrow," said the man, gravely lighting a cigar.

104568
E.L.

"It wouldn't be any good," laughed the girl. "Just once in a way we should probably love it. I meant I wonder what it would feel like if that was the only life we had ever known."

Her companion nodded.

"I know, *carissima*," he answered gently. "I have sometimes wondered the same thing. I suppose there must be compensations in respectability, otherwise so many people wouldn't be respectable. But I'm afraid it is one of those things that we shall never know."

"I think it's that," said the girl, waving her hand toward the mountains opposite, "that has caused my mood. It's all so perfectly lovely: the sky is so wonderfully blue. Just look at that sailing boat," she went on, pointing to one of the big lake barges, with its two huge lateen sails, creeping gently along. "It's all so peaceful and sometimes one wants peace."

"True," agreed the man. "One does. It's just reaction, and we've been busy lately." He rose and began to pace slowly up and down the balcony. "To be quite honest, recently I myself have once or twice thought that if I could pull off some really big coup—something, I mean, that ran into millions—I would give things up for good."

The girl smiled and shook her head.

"DON'T misunderstand me, my dear," he went on. "I do not suggest for a moment that we should settle down to a life of toping and ease. Neither one of us could exist without employing our brains. But with really big money behind us, we should be in a position to employ our brains a little more legitimately, shall I say, than we are able to at present and still get all the excitement we require. Take Drakahoff: that man controls three of the principal governments of Europe. The general public doesn't know it: the governments themselves won't admit it: but it's true for all that. As you know, that little job I carried out for him in Germany averted a second revolution. He didn't want one at the time, and so he called me in. And it cost him in all five million pounds. What was that to him?"

He shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

Copyright, 1923, by H. C. McNeile

"A mere flea bite: a bagatelle. Why, with that man an odd million or two one way or the other wouldn't be noticed in his passbook."

He paused and stared over the sunlit lake, while the girl watched him in silence.

"Given as much money as that, a man can rule the world. Moreover, he can rule it without fear of consequences. He can have all the excitement he requires: he can wield all the power he desires—and have special posses of police to guard him. I'm afraid we don't have many guard us."

The girl laughed and lit another cigarette.

"You are right, *mon ami*, we do not. Hello! Who can that be?"

INSIDE the sitting room the telephone bell was ringing, and with a slight frown Mr. Edward Blackton took off the receiver.

"What is it?"

From the other end came the voice of the manager, suitably deferential as befitted a client of such obvious wealth, installed in the most palatial suite of the Palace Hotel.

"Two gentlemen are here, Mr. Blackton," said the manager, "who wish to know when they can have the pleasure of seeing you. Their names are Sir Raymond Blantyre, and Mr. Jabez Leibhaus. They arrived this morning from England by the Simplon-Orient express, and they say that their business is most urgent."

A sudden gleam had come into Mr. Blackton's eyes as he listened, but when he answered his voice was almost bored.

"I shall be pleased to see both gentlemen at eleven o'clock up here. Kindly have champagne and sandwiches sent to my sitting room at that hour."

He replaced the receiver, and stood for a moment thinking deeply.

"Who was it?" called the girl from the balcony.

"Blantyre and Leibhaus, my dear," answered the man. "Now what the deuce can they want with me so urgently?"

"Aren't they both big diamond men?" asked the girl, coming into the room.

"They are," said Blackton. "In romantic fiction they would be described as two diamond kings. Anyway, it won't do them any harm to wait for half an hour."

"How did they find out your address? I thought you had left strict instructions that you were not to be disturbed."

There was regret in the girl's voice, and with a faint smile the man tilted back her head and kissed her.

"In our profession, *cara mia*," he said gently, "there are times when the strictest instructions have to be disobeyed. Freyder would never have dreamed of worrying me over a little thing, but unless I am much mistaken this isn't going to be little. It's going to be big: those two men don't go chasing half across Europe because they've mislaid a collar stud. Why—who knows? It might prove to be the big coup we were discussing a few minutes ago!"

HE kissed her again: then he turned abruptly away and the girl gave a little sigh. For the look that she knew so well had come into those gray-blue eyes: the alert, keen look which meant business. He crossed the room, and unlocked a heavy leather dispatch case. From it he took out a biggish book which he laid on the table while he lit another cigar. Then, having made himself comfortable on the balcony, he began to turn over the pages.

It was of the loose-leaf variety and on every page were entries in Blackton's small, neat handwriting. It was what he called his "Who's Who," but it differed from that excellent production in one marked respect. The people in Mr. Edward Blackton's book had not compiled their own notices—which rendered it considerably more truthful, even if less complimentary, than the orthodox volume.

It was arranged alphabetically and it contained an astounding wealth of information. In fact, in lighter moments the author was wont to say that when he retired from active life, he would publish it, and die in luxury on the large sums paid him to suppress it. Mentioned in it were the names of practically every man and woman possessed of real wealth—as Blackton regarded wealth—in Europe and America. There were, of course, many omissions, but in the course of years an extraordinary amount of strange and useful information had been collected. In many cases just bare details about the person were given: these were the uninteresting ones and consisted of people who passed the test as far as money was concerned, but about whom the author had no personal knowledge. In others, however, the entries were far more human. After the name would be recorded certain details, frequently of a most scurrilous description. And these details had one object and one object only—to assist in parting the victim from his money.

Not that Mr. Edward Blackton was a common blackmailer—far from it. Blackmailing pure and simple was a form of amusement which revolted his feelings as an artist. But to make use of certain privately gained information about a man when dealing with him was a different matter altogether. It was of great assistance in estimating character, when meeting a man for the first time, to know that his previous wife had divorced him for carrying on with the housemaid, and that he had then failed to marry the housemaid. Nothing of blackmail in that—just a pointer as to character.

In the immense ramifications of Mr. Blackton's activities, it was of course impossible for him to keep all these details in his head. And so, little by little, the book had grown until it now comprised over three hundred pages. Information obtained first-hand, or from absolutely certain resources, was entered in red: items not quite so reliable in black. And under Sir Raymond Blantyre's name the entry was in red.

Blantyre, Raymond. Born, 1858. Vice President Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate. Married daughter of John Perkins—wool merchant in London. Knighted, 1904. Something shady about him in South Africa—probably I. D. E. Races a lot. Wife a snob. Living up to the limit of his income. 5.13.

MR. BLACKTON laid the book on his knee and looked thoughtfully over the lake. The last three figures showed that the entry had been made in May, 1913, and if he was living up to the limit of his income then, he must have had to retrench considerably now. And wives who are snobs dislike that particularly.

He picked up the book again and turned up the *dossier* of his other visitor to find nothing of interest. Mr. Leibhaus had only bare details after his name, with the solitary piece of information that he, too, was a Vice-President of the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate.

He closed the book and relocked it in the dispatch case, then he glanced at his watch.

"I think, my dear," he said, turning to the girl, "that our interview had better be apparently private. Could you make yourself comfortable in your bedroom, so that you will be able to hear everything and give me your opinion afterward?" He opened the door for her and she passed through. "I confess," he continued, "that I'm a little puzzled. I cannot think what they want to see me about so urgently."

But there was no trace of this wonder on his face as five minutes later his two visitors were ushered in by the submanager.

"See that the sandwiches and champagne are sent at once please," he remarked, and the hotel official bustled away.

"We shall be undisturbed, gentlemen," he said, "after the waiter brings the tray. Until then, we might enjoy the view over the lake. It is rare, I am told, that one can see Les Dents du Midi quite so clearly."

The three men strolled into the balcony and leaned out. And it struck that exceptionally quick observer of human nature, Mr. Blackton, that both his visitors were a little nervous. Sir Raymond Blantyre, especially, was not at his ease. He answered the casual remarks of his host at random. He was a short stocky little man with a white mustache and a gold-rimmed eyeglass, which he had an irritating habit of taking in and out of his eye—and he gave a sigh of relief as the door finally closed behind the waiter.

"Now perhaps we can come to business, Count—er—I beg your pardon, Mr. Blackton."

"The mistake is a natural one," said his host suavely. "Shall we go inside the room to avoid any risk of being overheard?"

"I had better begin at the beginning," said Sir Raymond, when they were seated in the room, waving away his host's offer of champagne. "And when I've finished you will see, I have no doubt, our reasons for disturbing you in this way. Nothing short of the desperate position in which we find ourselves would have induced us to seek you out after what Mr. Freyder told my friend Leibhaus. But that situation is so desperate that we had no alternative."

Mr. Blackton's face remained quite expressionless, and the other, after a little pause, went on.

"If I could pull off some really big coup —something, I mean, that ran into millions —I would give things up," said the man. The girl smiled and shook her head

"DOUBTLESS you know who we are, Mr. Blackton. I am the President of the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate and Mr. Leibhaus is the senior Vice President. In the event of my absence at any time, he deputizes for me. I mention these facts to emphasize the point that we are the heads of that combine, and that you are therefore dealing with the absolute principals, and not with subordinates. Now I may further mention that although the Metropolitan is our particular syndicate, we are both of us considerably interested in other diamond enterprises. In fact, our entire fortune is bound up irretrievably in the diamond industry—as are the fortunes of several other men, for whom, Mr. Blackton, I am authorized to speak. So that I am in a position to say that not only am I here as representative of the Metropolitan Syndicate—but I am here as representative of the whole diamond industry and the enormous capital locked up in that industry."

"You make yourself perfectly clear, Sir Raymond," said Mr. Blackton quietly. His face was as masklike as ever, but he wondered more and more what could be coming.

Sir Raymond took out his eyeglass and polished it: then he took a sip of the champagne which, despite his refusal, his host had poured out for him.

"That being so, Mr. Blackton, and my position in the matter being fully understood, I will come to the object of our visit. One day about a fortnight ago I was dining at the house of a certain Professor Goodman. You may perhaps have heard of him by name? No! Well, he is, I understand, one of the foremost chemists of the day. He and I haven't much in common, but my wife and his became acquainted during the war, and we still dine with one another occasionally. There were six of us at dinner —our four selves, his daughter and an extraordinarily inane young man with an eyeglass—who, I gathered, was engaged to the daughter.

"It was during dinner that my attention was caught by a rather peculiar ornament that the daughter was wearing. It looked to me like a piece of ordinary cut glass mounted in a claw of gold, and she was using it as a brooch. The piece of glass was about the size of a large marble, and it scintillated so brilliantly as she

moved that I could not help noticing it. I may say that it struck me as a distinctly vulgar ornament—the sort of thing that a housemaid might be expected to wear when she was out. It surprised me, since the Goodmans are the last people one would expect to allow such a thing. And, of course, I should have said nothing about it had not the vapid youth opposite noticed me.

" 'Looking at the monkey nut?' he said, or something equally foolish. 'Pretty sound bit of work on the part of the old paternal parent!'

"Professor Goodman looked up and smiled, and the girl took it off and handed it to me.

" 'What do you think of it, Sir Raymond?' she said. 'I put it on especially for your benefit tonight.'

"I glanced at it, and, to my amazement, I found that it was a perfectly flawless diamond, worth certainly ten to twelve thousand pounds and possibly more. I suppose my surprise must have been obvious, because they all began to laugh.

" 'Well, what is your verdict, Blantyre?' said the professor.

" 'I will be perfectly frank,' I answered. 'I cannot understand how you can have placed such a really wonderful stone in such an unworthy setting.'

"And then the professor laughed still more.

" 'WHAT would you say was the value of that stone?' he inquired.

" 'I should be delighted to give Miss Goodman a check for ten thousand pounds for it here and now,' I said.

"And then he really roared with laughter.

" 'But what about it, Brenda?' he cried. 'Do you know what that stone cost me, Blantyre? Five pounds, ten shillings and sixpence—and two burnt fingers!' "

Blackton leaned forward in his chair and stared at the speaker.

"Well—what then?" he said quietly.

Sir Raymond mopped his forehead, and took another sip of champagne.

"You've guessed it, Mr. Blackton. It was false—not false, however, in the sense that synthetic pearls are false, but it had been made by a chemical process in Professor Goodman's laboratory. Otherwise, it was indistinguishable from the genuine article: in fact"—in his agitation he thumped the table with his fist—"it *was* the genuine article!"

Blackton carefully lit another cigar.

"And what did you do?" he inquired. "I presume that you have tested the matter fully since."

"Of course," answered the other. "I will tell you exactly what has happened. That evening after dinner I sat on talking with the professor. Somewhat naturally I allowed no hint of my agitation to show on my face. As you probably know, Mr. Blackton, artificial diamonds have been manufactured in the past—real diamonds, indistinguishable from those found in nature. But they have been small, and their cost has been greater when made artificially than if they had been found. And so the process has never been economically worth while. But this was altogether different. If what Professor Goodman told me was the truth—if he had indeed manufactured that diamond for five pounds in his laboratory, we were confronted with the possibility of an appalling crisis. And since he was the last person to tell a stupid lie, you may imagine my feelings.

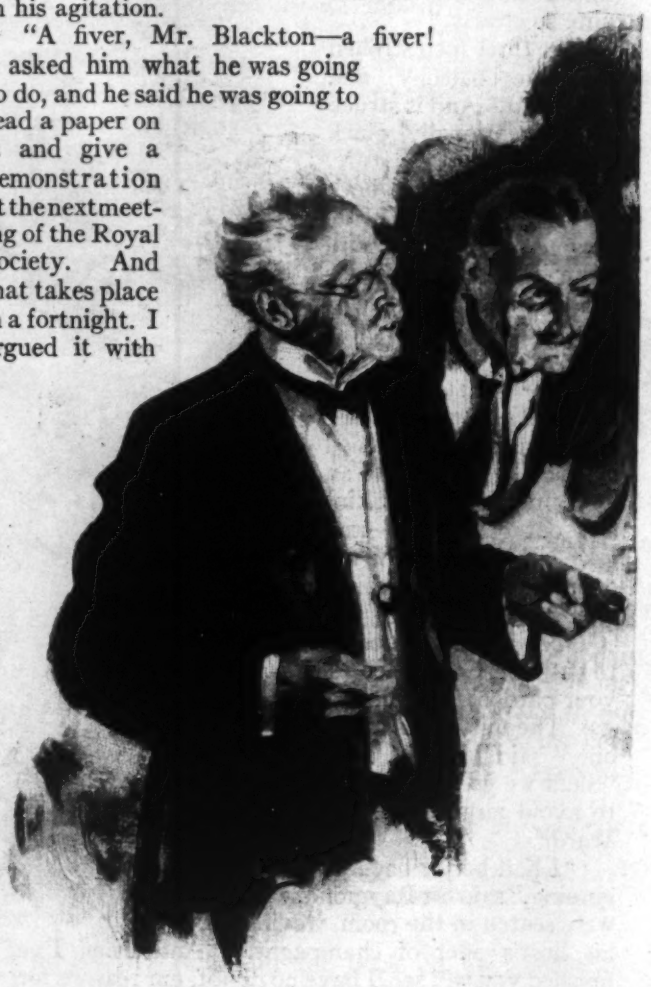
"I need hardly point out to you that the whole diamond market is an artificial one. The output of stones from the mines has to be limited to prevent a slump—to keep prices up. And what would happen if the market was swamped with stones worth a king's ransom each, as prices go today, and costing a fiver to produce was too impossible to contemplate. It meant, of course, absolute ruin to me and others in my position—to say nothing of hundreds of big jewelers and dealers.

"I pointed this out to Professor Goodman, but"—once again Sir Raymond mopped his forehead—"would you believe it, the wretched man seemed completely uninterested! All he was concerned about was his miserable chemistry.

" 'An absolutely unique discovery, my dear Blantyre,' he remarked complacently. 'And two years ago I bet professor'—I forget the fool's name, but at any rate he had bet this professor a fiver that he'd do it."

Sir Raymond rose and walked up and down the room in his agitation.

"A fiver, Mr. Blackton—a fiver! I asked him what he was going to do, and he said he was going to read a paper on it and give a demonstration at the next meeting of the Royal Society. And that takes place in a fortnight. I argued it with him, and I'm afraid I was foolish enough to threaten him. At any rate, he rose abruptly from the table, and I cursed myself for a fool. But toward the end of the evening he recovered himself sufficiently to agree to give me and the members of my syndicate a previous demonstration. His daughter also allowed me to take away her brooch, so that I could subject it to more searching tests the next day."



HE again sat down and stared at the man opposite him, who seemed more intent on how long he could get the ash of his cigar before it dropped, than on anything else.

"Next day, Mr. Blackton, my worst fears were confirmed. I subjected that stone to every known test—but it was useless. It *was a diamond*—perfect, flawless: and it had cost five pounds to make. I called together my syndicate, and at first they were inclined to be incredulous. They suggested fraud—as you know, there have been, in the past, several attempts made to obtain money by men who pretended they had discovered the secret

of making diamonds in the laboratory. And in every case, up to the present, sleight of hand has been proved. The big uncut diamond was not produced by the chemical reaction, but was introduced at some period during the experiment. Of course the idea was to obtain hush-money to suppress the supposed secret. I pointed out to my friends how impossible such a supposition was in the case of a man like Professor Goodman: and finally—to cut things short—they agreed to come around with me the following afternoon to see the demonstration.

"The professor had forgotten all about the appointment—he is that sort of man—and we waited in an agony of impatience while his secretary telephoned all over London. At last she got him, and the professor arrived, profuse in his apologies.

Then we examined the bowl. "Without that retort," the professor remarked, "the process would be impossible. It is the only thing known to science today which could resist the intense heat of the electric furnace"

" 'I have just been watching a most interesting experiment with some blue cheese mold,' he told me, 'and I quite forgot the time. Now, what is it you gentlemen want to see?' "

For the first time a very faint smile flickered on Mr. Blackton's lips, but he said nothing.

"I told him," continued Sir Raymond, "and we at once adjourned to the laboratory. Most of us had attended similar demonstrations before, and we expected to find the usual apparatus—a mold and a furnace, and so on. Nothing of the sort, however, could we see. There was an electric furnace: a sort of bowl made of some opaque material, and a variety of chemical salts in bottles.

" 'You will forgive me, gentlemen,' he remarked, 'if I don't give you my process in detail. I don't want to run any risk of my discovery leaking out before I address the Royal Society.'

"He beamed at us through his spectacles; and—serious though it was—I really could not help smiling. That he should make such a remark to us of all people!

" 'You are, of course, at liberty to examine everything that I put into this retort,' he went on, 'and the retort itself.' He was fumbling in his pocket as he spoke, and he finally produced two or three dirty sheets of paper, at which he peered. 'Dear me!' he exclaimed. 'I've got the wrong notes. These are the ones about my new albumin food for infants and adults. Where can I have left them?'

" 'I hope,' I remarked, as calmly as I could, 'that you haven't left them lying about where any one could get at them, professor.'

"He shook his head vaguely, though his reply was reassuring.

" 'No one could understand them even if I had,' he answered. 'Ah! Here they are.' With a little cry of triumph he produced some even dirtier scraps which he laid on the desk in front of him.

" 'I have to refer to my notes,' he said, 'as the process—though the essence of simplicity, once the correct mixture of the ingredients is obtained—is a difficult one to remember. There are no fewer than thirty-nine salts used in the operation. Now, would you gentlemen come closer, so that you can see everything I do.'

"He produced a balance which he proceeded to adjust with mathematical precision, while we crowded around as close as we could.

" 'While I think of it,' he said, looking up suddenly, 'is there any particular color you would like me to make?'

" 'Rose pink,' grunted some one, and he nodded.

" 'CERTAINLY,' he answered. 'That will necessitate the addition of a somewhat rare strontium salt—making forty in all.'

"He beamed at us and then he commenced. To say that we watched him closely would hardly convey our attitude: we watched him without movement, without speech, almost without breathing. He weighed his salts, and he mixed them—and that part of the process took an hour at least. Then he took up the bowl and we examined

that. It was obviously some form of metal, but that was as far as we could get. And it was empty.

" 'Without that retort, gentlemen,' he remarked, 'the process would be impossible. There is no secret as to its composition. It is made of a blend of tungsten and osmium, and is the only thing known to science today which could resist the immense heat to which this mixture will be subjected in the electric furnace. Now, possibly one of you would like to pour this mixture into the retort, place the retort in the furnace, and shut the furnace doors. Then I will switch on the current.'

"I personally did what he suggested, Mr. Blackton. I poured the mixture of fine powders into the empty bowl: I placed the bowl in the furnace, having first examined the furnace: and then I closed the doors. And I knew—and every man there knew—that there had been no suspicion of fraud. Then he switched on the current, and we sat down to wait.

"Gradually the heat grew intense—but no one thought of moving. At first the professor rambled on, but I doubt if any one paid any attention to him. Among other things he told us that from the very start of his experiments he had worked on different lines from the usual ones, which consisted of dissolving carbon in molten iron and then cooling the mass suddenly with cold water.

" 'That sets up gigantic pressure,' he remarked, 'but it is too quick. Only small stones are the results. My process was arrived at by totally different methods, as you see.'

"The sweat poured off us, and still we sat there silent—each of us busy with our own thoughts. I think even then we realized that there was no hope: we knew that his claims were justified. But we had to see it through—to make sure. The professor was absorbed in some profound calculations on his new albumin food: the furnace glowed white in the corner—and, Mr. Blackton, men worth tens of millions sat and dripped with perspiration in order to make certain that they were not worth as many farthings.

"I SUPPOSE it was about two hours later that the professor, having looked at his watch, rose and switched off the current.

" 'In about an hour, gentlemen,' he remarked, 'the retort will be cool enough to take out. I suggest that you should take it with you, and, having cut out the clinker, you should carry out your own tests on it. Inside that clinker will be your rose-pink diamond—uncut, of course. I make you a present of it: all I ask is that you return my retort.'

"He blinked at us through his spectacles.

" 'You will forgive me if I leave you now, but I have to deliver my address to some students on the catalytic influence of chromous chloride. I fear I am already an hour and a half late, but that is nothing new.' And with that the professor bustled hurriedly out of the room."

Sir Raymond paused and lit a cigarette.

"You may perhaps think, Mr. Blackton, that I have been unnecessarily verbose over details that are unimportant," he continued after a moment. "But my object has been to try to show you the type of man Professor Goodman is."

"You have succeeded admirably, Sir Raymond," said Blackton quietly.

"GOOD. Then I will go on more quickly. We took his retort home, and we cut out the clinker. No one touched it except ourselves. We chipped off the outside seals, and we came to the diamond. Under our own eyes we had it cut—roughly, of course, because time was urgent. Here are the results."

He handed over a small box to Blackton, who opened it. Inside, resting on some cotton wool, were two large rose-pink diamonds and three smaller ones—worth in all, to that expert's shrewd eye, anything up to twenty-five thousand pounds. He took out a pocket lens and examined the largest, and Sir Raymond gave a short, hard laugh.

"Believe me," he said harshly, "they're genuine, right enough. I wish to Heaven I could detect even the trace of a flaw. There isn't one, I tell you: they're perfect stones—and that's why we've come to you."

Blackton laid the box on the table, and renewed the contemplation of his cigar.

"At the moment," he remarked, "the connection is a little obscure. However, pray continue. I assume that you have interviewed the professor again."

"The very next morning," said Sir Raymond. "I went around, ostensibly to return his metal bowl, and then again I put the whole matter before him. I pointed out to him that if this discovery of his was made known it would involve thousands of people in utter ruin. I pointed out to him that, after all, no one could say that it was a discovery which could benefit the world generally, profoundly wonderful though it was. Its sole result, so far as I could see, would be to put diamond tiaras within the range of the average scullery maid. In short, I invoked every argument I could think of to try to persuade him to change his mind. Useless—utterly useless." He shook his head.

"To do him justice, I do not believe it is simply pig-headedness. He is honestly unable to understand our point of view. To him it is a scientific discovery concerning carbon, and, according to him, carbon is so vitally important, so essentially at the root of all life, that to suppress the results of an experiment such as this would be a crime against science. He sees no harm in diamonds being as plentiful as marbles: in fact, the financial side of the affair is literally meaningless to him.

"Meaningless, Mr. Blackton, as I found when I

Gallegher's Devil

READERS who enjoyed "The Ivory Bird Cage," by H. Bedford Jones, in the July McCLURE'S, will look forward eagerly to "Gallegher's Devil," a fascinating tale of the Great Lakes written by the same author for the October McCLURE'S. The illustrations are by Douglas Duer, whose refreshing pictures, in the July issue, for "The Wooing of Peg-Leg's Daughters" attracted widespread interest.

The old man swaying in the aisle suddenly bent his head and spoke to Sir Raymond

played my last card. In the name of my syndicate, I offered him two hundred and fifty thousand pounds to suppress it. He rang the bell—apologized for leaving me so abruptly—and the servant showed me out. And that is how the matter stands today. In a fortnight from now his secret will be given to the world, unless——"

Sir Raymond paused, and glanced at Mr. Leibhaus.

"Precisely," he agreed. "Unless, as you say——"

Mr. Blackton said nothing. It was not his business to help them out, though the object of their journey was now obvious.

"Unless, Mr. Blackton"—Sir Raymond took the plunge—"we can induce you to interest yourself in the matter."

Mr. Blackton raised his eyebrows slightly.

"I rather fail to see," he remarked, "how I can hope to succeed where you have failed. You appear to have exhausted every possible argument."

And now Sir Raymond was beginning to look visibly agitated. Unscrupulous business man though he was, the thing he had to say stuck in his throat. It seemed so cold-blooded, so horrible—especially in that room overlooking the sparkling lake with the peaceful, snow-tipped mountains opposite.

"IT was Baron Vanderton," he stammered, "who mentioned the Comte de Guy to me. He said that in a certain matter connected, I believe, with one of the big European banking firms, the Comte de Guy had been called in. And that as a result—er—a rather troublesome international financier had—er—disappeared."

He paused abruptly as he saw Blackton's face. It was hard and merciless, and the gray-blue eyes seemed to be boring into his brain.

"Am I to understand, Sir Raymond," he remarked, "that you are trying to threaten me into helping you?" He seemed to be carved out of stone, save for the fingers of his left hand which played a ceaseless tattoo on his knee.

"Good heavens, no, Mr. Blackton!" cried the other. "Nothing of the sort, believe me. I merely mentioned the baron to show you how we got on your trail. He told us that you were the only man in the world who would be able to help us, and then only if you were convinced that the matter was sufficiently big. I trust that now you have heard what we have to say you will consider—like Mr. Freyder—that the matter is big enough to warrant your attention. You must, Mr. Blackton: you really must!" He leaned forward in his excitement. "Think of it: millions and millions of dollars depending on the caprice of an old fool, who is really far more interested in his wretched albumin food. Why—it's intolerable!"

For a while there was silence, broken at length by Blackton.

"And so," he remarked calmly, "if I understand you aright, Sir Raymond, your proposal is that I should interest myself in the—shall we say—removal of Professor Goodman? Or, not to mince words, in his death!"

Sir Raymond shivered, and into Blackton's eyes there stole a look of faint contempt as he watched the other man.

"Precisely, Mr. Blackton," he muttered. "Precisely. In such a way, of course, that no shadow of suspicion can rest on us, or on—or on—any one."

Mr. Blackton rose: the interview was over.

"I will let you know my decision after lunch," he remarked. "Shall we drink coffee together here at two o'clock? I expect my daughter will be in by then."

HE opened the door and bowed them out: then he returned to the table and picked up the bottle of champagne. It was empty, as was the plate of sandwiches. He looked at his own unused glass, and, with a faint shrug of his shoulders, he crossed to his dispatch case and opened it. And when the girl came in he was making a couple of entries in his book.

The first was under the heading "Blantyre" and consisted of a line drawn through the word "Vice": the second was under the heading Liebhaus, and consisted of the one word "Glutton" written in red. He was thorough in his work.

"You heard?" he said, as he replaced the book.

"Every word," she answered, lighting a cigarette. "What do you propose to do?"

"There is only one possible thing to do," he remarked. "Don't you realize, my dear, that had I heard of this discovery I should have been compelled to interfere, even if they had not asked me to. In my position I could not permit a diamond slump; as you know, we have quite a few ourselves. But there is no reason why they shouldn't pay me for it!" He smiled gently. "I shall cross to England by the Orient express tonight."

"But surely," cried the girl, "over such a simple

matter as this seems to be you needn't go yourself!"

He smiled even more gently, and slipped his arm around her shoulders.

"Do you remember what we were talking about this morning?" he said. "The big coup? Don't you see that even if this is not quite it, it will fill in the time."

She looked a little puzzled.

"Can't say that I do!" she cried tersely. "You can't ask 'em more than half a million."

"FUNNILY enough, that is the exact figure I intended to ask them," he replied. "But you've missed the point, my love—and I'm surprised at you. Everything that Blantyre said this morning was correct with regard to the impossibility of letting such a discovery become known to the world at large. I have no intention of letting it become known; but I have still less intention of letting it be lost. That would be an act of almost suicidal folly. Spread abroad, the knowledge would wreck everything: retained by one individual, it places that individual in a position of supreme power. And, needless to say, I propose to be that individual."

He was staring thoughtfully over the lake, and suddenly she seized his left hand.

"Ted—stop it!"

For a moment he looked at her in surprise: then he laughed.

"Was I doing it again?" he asked. "It's a good thing you spotted that trick of mine, my dear. If there ever is a next time with Drummond"—his eyes blazed suddenly—"if there ever is—well, we shall see. Just at the moment, however, let us concentrate on Professor Goodman. A telling picture that—wasn't it? Can't you see the old man, blinking behind his spectacles, absorbed in calculations on proteins for infants, with a ring of men around him not one of whom but would have murdered him then and there, if he had dared!"

"But I still don't see how this is going to be anything out of the ordinary," persisted the girl.

"My dear, I'm afraid that the balmy air of the Lake of Geneva has had a bad effect on you." Mr. Blackton looked at her in genuine surprise. "I confess that I haven't worked out the details yet, but one point is quite obvious. Before Professor Goodman departs this life he is going to make several hundred diamonds for me, though it would never do to let the two anxious gentlemen downstairs know it. They might say that I wasn't earning my half million. Those diamonds I shall unload with care and discretion during the years to come, so as not to cause a slump in prices. So it really boils down to the fact that the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate will be paying me half a million for the express purpose of putting some five or ten million pounds worth of stones in my pocket. My dear! It's a gift: it's one of those things which make strong men consult a doctor for fear they may be imagining things!"

The girl laughed.

"Where do I come in?"

"AT the moment I'm not sure. So much will depend on circumstances. At any rate, for the present you had better stop on here, and I will send for you when things are a little more advanced."

A waiter knocked and began to lay the table for lunch; and when at two o'clock the coffee and liqueurs arrived, closely followed by his two visitors, Mr. Blackton was in a genial mood. An excellent bottle of Marcobrunner, followed by a glass of his own particular old brandy, had mellowed him to such an extent that he very nearly produced the bottle for them, but sanity prevailed. It was true that they were going to pay him half a million for swindling them soundly, but there were only three bottles of that brandy left in the world.

The two men looked curiously at the girl as Blackton introduced them—Baron Vanderton had told them about the beauty of this so-called daughter who was his constant and invariable companion. Only she, so he had affirmed, knew what the man who now called himself Blackton really looked like when shorn of his innumerable disguises into which he fitted himself so marvelously. But there were more important matters at stake than that, and Sir Raymond Blantyre's hand shook a little as he helped himself to a cigarette from the box on the table.

"Well, Mr. Blackton," he said, as the door closed behind the waiter, "have you decided?"

"I have," returned the other calmly. "Professor Goodman's discovery will not be made public. He will not speak or give a demonstration at the Royal Society."

With a vast sigh of relief, Sir Raymond sank into a chair.

"And your—er—fee?"

"Half a million pounds. Two hundred and fifty thousand paid by check made out to self—now: the remainder when you receive indisputable proof that I have carried out the job."

It was significant that Sir Raymond made no attempt to haggle. Without a word he drew his check book from his pocket, and, going over the writing table, he filled in the required amount.

"I should be glad if it was not presented for two or three days," he remarked, "as it is drawn on my private account, and I shall have to put in funds to meet it on my return to England."

Mr. Blackton bowed.

"You return tonight?" he asked.

"By the Orient Express. And you?"

Mr. Blackton shrugged his shoulders.

"The view here is delightful," he murmured.

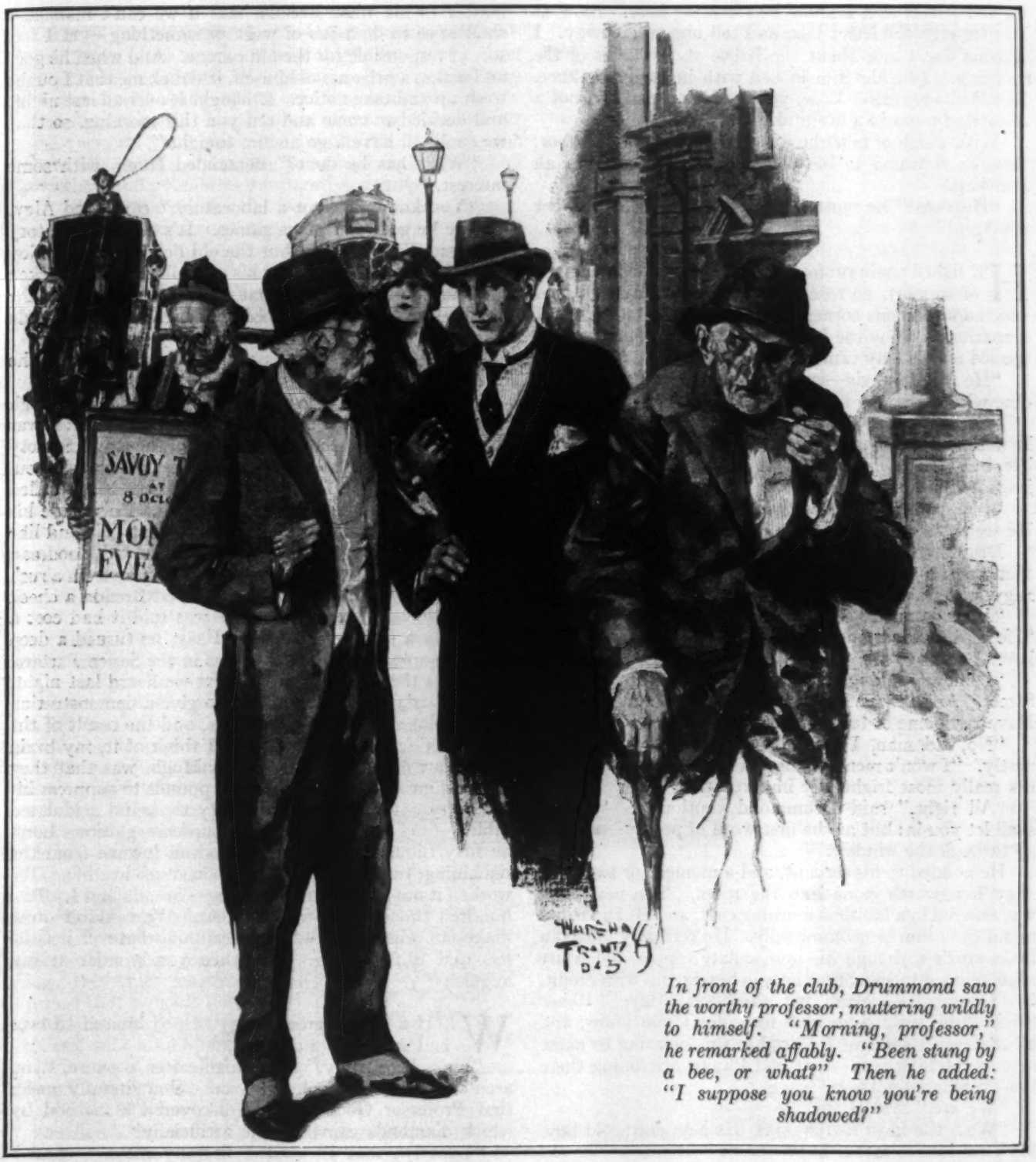
AND with that the representatives of the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate had to rest content for the time—until, in fact, the train was approaching the Swiss frontier. They had just finished their dinner, their zest for which, though considerably greater than on the previous night, in view of the success of their mission, had been greatly impaired by the manners of an elderly German sitting at the next table. He was a bent and withered old man with a long hook nose and white hair, who, in the intervals of querulously swearing at the attendant, deposited his dinner on his waistcoat. At length he rose, and, having pressed ten centimes into the outraged hand of the head waiter, he stood for a moment by their table, swaying with the motion of the train. And suddenly he bent down and spoke to Sir Raymond.

"Two or three days I think you said, Sir Raymond."

With a dry chuckle he was gone, tottering and lurching down the carriage, leaving the President of the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate gasping audibly.

CHAPTER II

WHEN Brenda Goodman, in a moment of mental aberration, consented to marry Algy Longworth she little guessed the result. From being just an ordinary partially wanting specimen he became a raving imbecile. Presumably she must have thought it was natural as she showed no signs of terror, at any rate in public, but it was otherwise with his friends. Men who had been wont to foregather with him to consume the matutinal cocktail, now fled with shouts of alarm whenever he hove in sight. Only the baser members of that celebrated society, the



In front of the club, Drummond saw the worthy professor, muttering wildly to himself. "Morning, professor," he remarked affably. "Been stung by a bee, or what?" Then he added: "I suppose you know you're being shadowed?"

main object of which is to cultivate the muscles of the left arm when consuming liquid refreshment, clung to him in his fall from grace. They found that his mental fog was so opaque that he habitually forgot the only rule and raised his glass to his lips with his right hand. And since that immediately necessitated a further round at his expense, they gave great glory to Allah for such an eminently satisfactory state of affairs. And when it is further added that he was actually discovered by Peter Darrell reading sentimental poems on the morning of the Derby, it will be readily conceded that matters looked black.

That the state of affairs was only temporary was, of course, recognized: but while it lasted it became necessary for him to leave the councils of men. A fellow who wants to trot back to the clubhouse from the ninth green in the middle of a four-ball foursome to blow his fiancée a kiss through the telephone is a truly hideous spectacle.

And so the sudden action of Hugh Drummond, one fine morning in June, is quite understandable. He had been standing by the window of his room staring into the street, and playing Beaver with himself, when with a wild yell he darted to the bell. He pealed it several times; then he rushed to the door and shouted.

"Denny! Where the devil are you, Denny?"

"Here, sir."

His trusted body servant and erstwhile batman appeared from the nether regions of the house, and regarded his master in some surprise.

"The door, Denny: the front door. Go and bolt and bar it: put the chain up: turn all the latchkeys. Don't stand there blinking, you fool! Mr. Longworth is tacking

up the street, and I know he's coming here. Blow at him through the letter box, and tell him to go away. I will not have him about the house at this hour of the morning. Tell him I'm in bed with housemaid's knee. Not *the* housemaid's knee, you ass: it's a malady, not a dissecting room in a hospital."

With a sigh of relief he watched Denny bar the door: then he returned to his own room and sank into an armchair.

"Heavens!" he muttered. "What an escape! Poor old Algy!"

HE sighed again profoundly, and then, feeling in need of support, he rose and crossed to a cask of beer which adorned one corner of the room. And he was just preparing to enjoy the fruits of his labors, when the door opened and Denny came in.

"He won't go, sir—says he must see you, before you dine with his young lady tonight."

"Great Scott! Denny—isn't that enough?" said Drummond wildly. "Not that one minds dining with her, but it's watching him that is so painful. Have you inspected him this morning?"

"I kept the door on the chain, sir, and glanced at him. He seems to me to be a little worried."

Drummond crossed to the window and looked out. Standing on the pavement outside was the unfortunate Algy, who waved his stick wildly at sight of him.

"Your damned man Denny has gone mad!" he cried. "He kept the door on the chain and gibbered like a monkey. I want to see you."

"I know you do, Algy: I saw you coming up Brook Street. And it was I who told Denny to bar the door. Have you come to talk to me about love?"

"No, old man, I swear I haven't," said Algy earnestly. "I won't mention the word, I promise you. And it's really most frightfully important."

"All right," said Drummond cautiously. "Denny shall let you in: but at the first word of poetry—out you go through the window."

He nodded to his servant, and a moment or two later Algy Longworth came into the room. The newcomer was arrayed in a faultless morning coat, and Hugh Drummond eyed him noncommittally. He certainly looked a little worried, though his immaculate topper and white spats seemed to show that he was bearing up with credit.

"Going to Ranelagh, old bird," said Algy. "Hence the bathing suit. Lunching first, don't you know, and all that—so I thought I'd drop in this morning to make sure of catching you. You and Phyllis are dining there this evening, aren't you?"

"We are," said Hugh.

"Well, the most awful thing has happened, old boy. My prospective father-in-law to be—Brenda's dear old male parent—has gone mad. He's touched: he's wanting: he's up the pole."

HE lit a cigarette impressively, and Drummond stared at him.

"What's the matter with the old thing?" he demanded. "I met him outside his club yesterday and he didn't seem to be any worse than usual."

"My dear boy, I didn't know anything about it till last night!" cried Algy. "He sprang it on us at dinner, and I tell you I nearly swooned. I tried to register mirth, but I failed, Hugh—I failed. I shudder to think what my face must have looked like." He was pacing up and down the room in his agitation. "You know, don't you, old man, that he ain't what you'd call rolling in boodle? I mean, with the best will in the world, you couldn't call him a financial noise. And though, of course, it doesn't matter to me what Brenda has—if we can't manage I shall have to do a job of work or something—yet I feel sort of responsible for the old parent. And when he goes and makes a prize ass of himself, it struck me that I ought to sit up and take notice. I thought it over all last night, and decided to come and tell you this morning, so that we could all have a go at him tonight."

"What has he done?" demanded Hugh, with some interest.

"You know he's got a laboratory," continued Algy, "where he goes and plays games. It's a perfect factory of extraordinary smells, but the old dear seems to enjoy himself. He'll probably try his new albuminized chicken food on you tonight, but that's a detail. To get to the point—have you ever noticed that big diamond Brenda wears as a brooch?"

"Yes—I have. Phyllis was speaking about it the other night."

"You know he made it," said Algy quietly, and Hugh stared at him. "It is still supposed to be a secret: it was to be kept dark till the next meeting of the Royal Society—but after what has happened I decided to tell you. About a fortnight ago a peculiar-looking bloke called Sir Raymond Blantyre came and dined. He's made his money in diamonds and he was on to that diamond like a terrier on to a rat. And when he heard old Goodman had made it, I thought he was going to expire from a rush of blood to the head. He'd just offered Brenda a check for ten thousand for it, when he was told it had cost a little over a fiver to make. As I say, he turned a deep magenta and dropped his eyeglass in the Sauce Tartare. That was the first spasm: the next we heard last night. Apparently the old man agreed to give a demonstration to this bloke and some of his pals, and the result of the show was—great heavens, when I think of it, my brain comes out in a rash!—the result, Hugh, was that they offered him a quarter of a million pounds to suppress his discovery. Two hundred and fifty thousand acidulated tablets—and he refused. One supreme glorious burst on fifty thousand of the best, and an income from the remaining two hundred for the rest of his life. We worked it out after dinner, my boy—Brenda and I. Two hundred thousand at five per cent. We couldn't quite make out what it would come to, but whatever it is he has cast it from him. And then you wonder at my anguish!"

WITH a hollow groan, Algy helped himself to beer and sank into a chair.

"Look here, Algy," said Hugh, after a pause, "you aren't playing the fool, are you? You literally mean that Professor Goodman has discovered a method by which diamonds can be made artificially?"

"Exactly: that is what I literally mean. And I further literally mean that he has turned down an offer of quarter of a million thick-uns to keep dark about it. And what I want you and Phyllis to do this evening——"

"Dry up!" interrupted Hugh. He was staring out of the window, and his usual look of inane good temper had completely vanished. He was thinking deeply and after a few moments he swung around on the disconsolate Algy.

"This is a pretty serious affair, Algy," he remarked.

"You bet your life it is," agreed his friend. "Quarter——"

"Forget the boodle. That's bad I admit—but it's not that I'm thinking of."

"I don't know what the deuce else there is to think about. Just because he wants to spout out his footling discovery to a bunch of old geysers at the Royal Society——"

Hugh regarded him dispassionately for a moment. "I have often wondered why they ever let you leave school," he remarked. "Your brain is even smaller than the ten bob helping of caviare they gave me at the Majestic last night. You don't really think it's a footling discovery, do you? You don't really think people run about the streets of London pressing two hundred and fifty thousand pounds on comparative strangers for fun?"

"Oh! I suppose the old bean has spotted a winner right enough," conceded Algy grudgingly.

"NOW, look here," said Drummond quietly. "I don't profess to know anything about diamonds or the diamond market. But if what you say is correct—if the professor can manufacture for a fiver a stone worth ten thousand pounds, at current prices, you don't need to know much about markets to see that diamonds will be on a par with bananas as soon as the process is known. Further, you don't need to know much about markets to see that such a state of affairs would be deuced unpopular with quite a lot of people. If you've got all your money in diamonds and wake up one bright morning to read in the paper that a diamond weighing half a ton has just been manufactured for three and sixpence, it's going to make the breakfast kipper look a bit jaded."

"I know all that, old boy," said Algy, a bit wearily. "But they're just additional reasons for the old ass taking the money. Then every one would be happy. Only he's so confoundedly pig-headed! Why when I sort of suggested after dinner last night during the nut mastication period that he could do a lot with the boodle—help him no end with his albuminized chicken seed, and all that—he got quite stuffy.

" 'My dear boy,' he said, 'you don't understand. To offer a scientist money to suppress a discovery of possibly far-reaching importance is not only an insult to him, but it is also an insult to science. I would not suppress this for a million pounds.'

"Then he forgot to pass the port, and the meeting broke up in disorder."

Hugh nodded thoughtfully.

"I'm afraid they will suppress it for him," he said gravely.

Algy stared at him.

"How do you mean, suppress it for him?" he demanded at length.

"I haven't an idea," answered Drummond. "Not even the beginning of one. But people have fallen in front of tube trains before now: people have been accidentally killed by a passing car."

"But, good heavens, man!" cried Algy dazedly. "You don't mean to say that you think some one will murder the poor old fruit!"

Drummond shrugged his shoulders. "Your future father-in-law has it in his power to ruin completely large numbers of extremely wealthy men. Apparently with the best will in the world he proposes to do so. He has butted into a huge vested interest, and, as far as I can make out from what you've told me, he quite fails to realize the fact." He lit a cigarette thoughtfully.

"But what the devil are we to do, Hugh?" said Algy, now very serious himself. "I tell you it will be impossible to make him accept that money. He's as docile as a sheep in some ways, but once he does stick his toes in over anything, a bag of gunpowder won't shift him."

"Well, if he really is determined to go through with it, it may be necessary to get him away and keep a watchful eye on him till he gets it off his chest at the Royal Society. That is to say, if he'll come. Once it's out—it's out, and the reasons for doing away with him will largely have disappeared," he explained.

"Yes—but I say, old man — murder!" Algy harked back to his original point. "Don't you think that's a bit over the odds?"

Hugh laughed grimly. "You've lived the quiet life too long, Algy. There are stakes at issue now which strike me as being a deuced sight bigger than anything we played for with dear old Carl Peterson. Bigger, at any rate, financially." An almost dreamy look came into his eyes, and he sighed deeply. "Those were the days, Algy—those were the days. I'm afraid we shall never have them again. Still—if what I'm afraid of is correct, we might have a bit of fun looking after the old man. Dull, of course, but better than nothing." He sighed again, and helped himself to more beer. "Now you trot off, and lunch with Brenda. Don't tell her anything about what I've said. I shall make one or two discreet inquiries this afternoon, and this evening I will bring the brain to bear over the fish and chips." He paused and raised his glass.

"Right, old man!" cried Algy, rising with alacrity. "Deuced good of you and all that. I'd hate the dear old bird to take it in the neck. His port is pretty putrid, I admit—but still——"

He waved his stick cheerfully, and a few second later Hugh watched him walking rapidly down Brook Street. And long after Algy had disappeared he was still standing at the window staring into the street.

HUGH DRUMMOND laid no claim to being brilliant. His brain, as he frequently remarked, was of the "also-ran" variety. But he was undoubtedly the possessor of shrewd common sense, which generally enabled him to arrive at the same result as a far more brilliant man would reach, and, incidentally, by a much more direct route. He was, it may be said, engaged in trying to arrive at what he called, in military parlance, the general idea. He did it by a process of reasoning which at any rate was easy to follow. [*Continued on page* 126]

In the Professor's Lair

ABOVE is a sketch by Marshall Frantz for one of his striking illustrations to be published with the next installment of "The Third Round." This new novel of Major McNeile's will be an outstanding feature throughout the fall issues of McCLURE'S.

A Race that Was Run to a Stirring Tune in the Magic Voice of

The Irish Linnet

By Harley P. Lathrop

Illustrations by A. L. Bairnsfather

"It may be for years and it may be forever,
Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?"

SAD, haunting, poignant, sung in a rich throaty contralto, the strains of "Kathleen Mavourneen" grieved across the moon-drenched paddock. Timmy O'Brien, nestling deep among the blankets in the tackle room, prodded his father with a sharp elbow.

"Listen, father, 'tis the fairies, I dunno?"

Patsy O'Brien stirred to wakefulness. "Hush, Timmy me bhoy. 'Tis only Mary Curran singin' the fight out av Rordigan King."

"Kathleen Mavourneen, the gray dawn is breaking——"

throbbed the haunting melody. Patsy O'Brien, every fiber of his Celtic being attuned in harmony, his blue Irish eyes blinking rapidly, raised on one elbow.

"Sure 'tis like the fairies singin' in the vale av Curragh," sleepily sighed Timmy. "What for do she be singin' to Rordigan King?"

"Oh, why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?"

The song rang to a glorious end. Patsy O'Brien, wrapped in a sort of a shivering ecstacy, made furtive dabs at the scalding tears which ran down his leathern cheeks.

"And why do she be——" began Timmy.

Sitting erect in his blankets, Patsy O'Brien stretched forth a quieting hand.

"Listen, Timmy, 'tis a tale ye should be hearin'."

The radiant moonlight, filtering in through a half-opened door, invested the tackle room with a kind of eerie splendor. From without came whispering, sibilant night noises, tempered by the contented rustlings of horses in the long row of stalls across the alley. His eyes half closed, in a voice dreamy with romance, Patsy O'Brien wove the legendary tale of the Rordigan horses for his son.

"Long, long ago, Timmy me lad, whin the Currans were lords in the land, knights dressed in gold armor used to go for to fight the infidels across the seas. 'Twas then Mary Curran's ancistor used to ride at the head av his horsemen. It was the first of the Rordigan strain that he rode. A rampagin', runnin', fightin' baste of a stallion he was, wid the heart av a lion and the divil's own courage.

"ACCORDIN' to the tale, all durin' a battle the Rordigan stallion would be a ragin' demon, red mad from bitin' and strikin' at the black horses av thim heathens. Niver a dark-colored animal would be safe about him as long as the fog av hate lasted and niver a rider could control him. 'Tis said that only with music could he be calmed, so they sang to quiet him, sometimes in the heat av battle, sometimes before. And, lad, from sire to son this ugly streak, this hate for a black horse, which shows only whin the blood gets hot, has been handed down. Rordigan King, the last av his line is not free from it. Tomorrow he runs in the Derby, so Mary Curran is calmin' him this night in his stall."

"Will the charm work do ye think, father?"

"God grant it, me bhoy, 'tis niver failed yit. Let's go to shlape now."

And sleep they did before the Irish moon saw the last of the Currans hurrying across the down from the soothed and quiet Rordigan King.

In the bright afternoon sunlight of the following day, Timmy O'Brien, the fanciful legend fresh in his memory, the brooding strains of "Kathleen Mavourneen" haunting his ears, viewed the historic parade that precedes the running of the Irish Derby.

What a heart-warming spectacle, what a never-to-be-forgotten cavalcade it was! Each animal was led by its owner and ridden by a jockey in brilliantly colored silks. Onward they came down the rail and past the stands. Clean-limbed, silken-coated, the acme of selective breeding, each horse was a blue-blooded aristocrat of the equine world.

First came "Surcharge," led by Lord Lansmore and topped by a jockey in gold and scarlet; then "Ararat," piloted by the Honorable Cecil Towne, his rider a blot of purple; next the "Rordigan King," nuzzling lovingly at Mary Curran, his rider clad in flaming cerise. One by one they minced down the track, the pick of the Irish three-year-olds, fifteen in all.

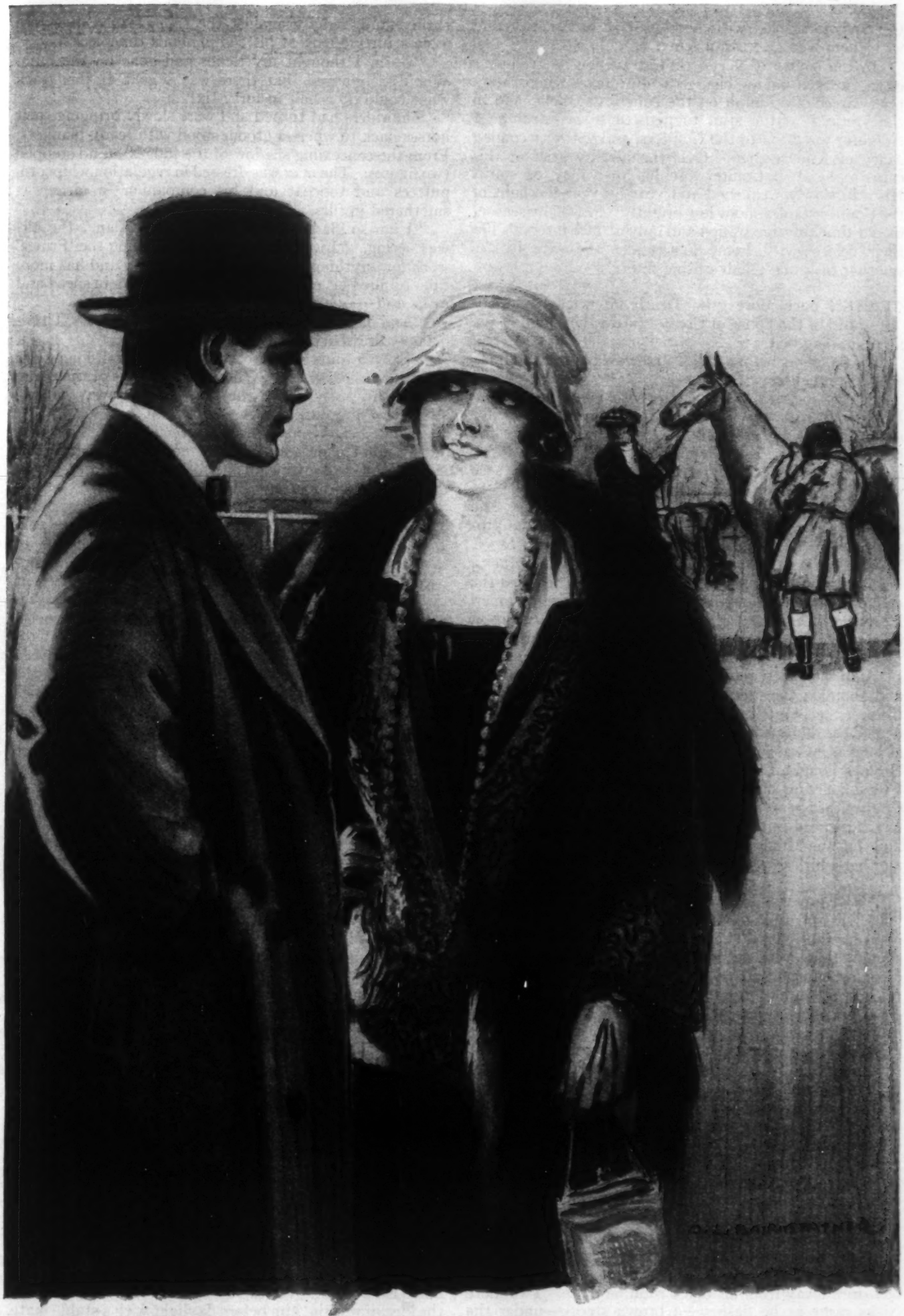
FROM the rail, with the balance of the stable rats, Timmy viewed the running of that historic event. He saw the barrier sprung, the picturesque start and the horses, resembling in the distance a living torrent of garish color, thunder around the track. In his childish imagination he rode with the cerise-clad jockey on Rordigan King. Off to a bad start, he lifted him into the thick of it. With whip and spur he fought for the lead and the rail, driving the King home, winner on the strength of his sheer, cold nerve and courage.

Then an hour later, on the paddock's green, Timmy, with eyes popping, saw an event which marked an epoch in the history of Irish horse flesh.

It was Phil Coulter, clean, quiet, straight-eyed, who would bet on the hop of a flea and who would back to the limit his judgment on anything living; Phil Coulter, open-handed, liberal, who never failed a friend, who never questioned price when measured against a horse he believed in, and whose stables were the boast and pride of the American turf.

"Fifty thousand, seventy-five thousand, one hundred thousand. Name your price, Miss Mary. America needs Rordigan King." And all the while Phil Coulter's eyes were telling that old, old tale, pledging a lifetime of love and devotion to the last of the Currans.

Mary Curran refused to name a price for the Rordigan King, but yielded to the eternal question. She and Phil Coulter were married and the wedding dwarfed anything the Vale of Kildare had ever experienced. For one full week the country side was lighted by bonfires. Potheen flowed like water and in the cabeens no man's money was worth the taking. Then Mary, the last of the



"I'm so glad you brought me out, Alan," the girl was saying. "The 'Prince' is a perfect beauty!"

Currans, journeyed with her husband to America and with them went Rordigan King.

In the course of years, time, traveling its relentless cycle, worked many changes. Rordigan King had a brief career of triumph on the American tracks, and in time retired to the stud to perpetuate his strain. A daughter was born to the Coulters, and with her coming Mary of Kildare died. Overwhelmed by grief at this catastrophe, Phil Coulter lost his buoyancy of spirit. His grip slowly weakened and year by year the light of the Coulter stables shone less brightly. Season by season, its old-time prestige waned and only at rare intervals did their colors drive home first under the wire in the smother of a mad, hair-raising finish.

THEN once more grim Death intervened and the head of the house of Coulter heard the sound of the final saddling bell.

On the night before Phil Coulter died he talked long with his daughter.

"Dear," he said, "I am going on the long ride. Before I go I want to warn you that the track is no fit place for a girl, even though the lure be strong and the love of it be born in her. Promise me, Mary, that you'll sell the horses and never trust your happiness to them or those who handle them. Then I can die happy."

Misty-eyed, Mary Coulter gave her promise. She offered the breeding farm for sale and among the prospective purchasers came Alan Haynes. Young, eager, hopeful, enthralled by the rainbow glamour of the tracks, his obsession was the thoroughbred and he cherished the chimeric dream of breeding the great American winner. He came to look at the horses and ended by falling in love with Mary Coulter. Almost, but not quite, was reënacted the impetuous wooing of Mary Curran.

Alan, however, refused to give up his chimeric ideas and abandon the precarious life of the track. So Mary Coulter, keeping the promise she had made her father, denied the dictates of her heart and refused to marry him as long as he was in the racing game. Nevertheless, Alan Haynes bought the stud farm and embarked upon his Utopian dream of breeding the famous winner. Mary Coulter, her heart heavy with double grief, plunged into her music and in time fared forth on the operatic stage, hailed as the "Irish Linnet." Then the cycle of Fate took another whirl.

THREE years after Phil Coulter's death Get-away Kid and Abie the Tout sat hunched on the top rail opposite the judges' stand. As all enterprising hustlers should, they were out garnering the sheaves of early-morning information. Keen competitors in the business of relaying inside information to a gullible public for a consideration, an unwritten rule—plus obvious reasons—usually impelled them to play a lone hand. But this morning a nippy spring wind which still contained a hint of winter's chill had caused them to draw together for mutual warmth.

On the opposite side of the track at the half-mile marker, two horses, dim silhouettes in the murky half light which precedes the coming dawn, broke from a gallop into a run. Two stop watches clicked in unison. Hunching closer together, heads drawn turtlewise into their collars, Get-away Kid and Abie the Tout sat in bored, shivery silence.

Foggily distorted in the distance, the horses made the turn at the three-quarters pole and came thundering down the home stretch. With no apparent effort, the bay drew away from his black running mate. Two more clicks came as he flashed—a brown streak—under the wire. Abie shot a swift glance at his watch, whistled shrilly, and, strictly against the code, leaned over and stole a furtive look at his companion's timepiece.

"Gosh, I thought my ticker had gone on the bum. Who'd 'a' guessed that there was a goat at this track what could do a half in forty-six!"

The riders had turned and were slowly bringing their horses back to where a groom stood with ready blankets. From the concealing shadow of the judges' stand stepped two figures. The man was dressed in regulation whipcord, puttees and topcoat and his companion—a girl—was smothered in furs.

"I am so glad you brought me out, Alan," the girl was saying. "I wouldn't have missed seeing the 'Prince' work for anything. He is a perfect beauty and has more than fulfilled his early promise. A Rordigan in speed and looks and——"

"And disposition," the man finished grimly. "That's his only drawback."

The two touts sat perched on the top rail long after the other pair had left. When the first rays of the rising sun peeped redly above the horizon, Get-away slipped stiffly to the ground.

"Let's beat it for the feed trough, Abie," he said. "They ain't goin' to uncover no more hounds this mornin'. Guess everything else must be froze stiff in their stalls."

SIDE by side, they plodded toward the track restaurant and breakfast. Get-away, blasé veteran of many seasons, was lost in speculative possibilities connected with the future. Abie, a hustler of more recent vintage and a firm believer in the axiom "a bird in hand, etc.," was mulling over the significance of the only morning workout they had timed. Not until they were halfway through their meal was the silence that lay between them broken. Then Abie, easing up somewhat from the work in hand, lifted his voice and spoke about that which was nearest his heart.

"Let's trade hunches, Get-away. We're both wise to what that Rordigan Prince clicked it off in this mornin'."

Get-away, his coffee cup halfway to his lips, paused to snort scornfully.

"If you want my high-up on that goat, I'm offen him like a dirty shirt."

Abie bared his disbelief in a raucous cackle. According to the twisted code of ethics which govern their profession, a straight tip to a brother hustler was an unheard-of thing. Abie, discounting this expected double-cross, was satisfied that Get-away's deductions were the same as his own. He figured that Rordigan Prince was being groomed for a killing. Still, he thought, there was nothing like being sure. Get-away was wise and canny when it came to smelling out killings.

"Yes, you are! You'll be out peddlin' dope on that canary inside a half an hour," he jeered.

For once, in defiance of all traditions, Get-away had told the truth, consequently his companion's scoffing attitude piqued his professional pride.

"Listen here, Abie," Get-away said wearily, "that horse is seven years old. He's been started at different times on every track in the country and ain't never romped home with the gravy yet. A killin' on a spoiled seven-year-old maiden—sweet geranium! The glue works instead of the winners' circle is where that plug is headed for."

Abie was unimpressed.

"Aw, you're nuts," he scornfully retorted. "That horse is fit to run over the moon right now. And what's the idea of workin' him before daylight with a stable mate, if they ain't framin' a killin' on his first start? Tell me

that, will you?" He leaned back in his chair complacently.

"Abie, you're ignorant—ignorant as hell. That horse is bein' worked out in private for a reason you're too dumb to see."

"Well, I seen him do a half in forty-six and that's good enough for me," Abie gloated. "A thousand beans on his old smeller the first time he's called, that's the line I'm peddlin'."

GET-AWAY rattled his knife and fork in impatient disgust.

"I hadn't ought to try and tell a wise gink like you anythin', but you're so ignorant it's plumb pitiful. You listen and I'll spill you an earful of stuff you'd ought to know, if you don't. Alan Haynes has got a stud farm full of colts sired by this Rordigan Prince. He's getting to the end of his rope and it's a case of sell some or say 'howdy' to the sheriff some fine mornin'. Now a colt from a sire that ain't never won a single stake has got about as much chance of listenin' for the starter's pistol as you have of bein' elected Pope of Rome. It'll take a big winnin' to start them colts a-circulatin'."

"Abie, you're ignorant, ignorant as hell," said Get-away, in impatient disgust. "I hadn't ought to try and tell a wise gink like you anything!"

"Sure, plain as a cat's meow," chortled Abie. "The first race he'll be chalked fifty to one on the boards, and Haynes'll have a bag full of dough bet on one whisker. Me and some guy with a roll'll be ridin' on the other whisker, too."

"You don't get me, Abie. Let me finish," Get-away protested, throwing professional caution to the winds. "Turn your good ear round. Rompin' home on this bush track don't spell glory. And a horse can't win get-away money here, let alone helpin' his reputation. He's been brought to this track for a little early schoolin' and a tryout or so and I'll tell you what makes me think it. All the old timers know that Rordigan Prince ain't got no more use for a black horse than you have for a piece of fat pork. If there is a black in the race—and the other owners always tend to that—the Prince'll quit around the three-quarters post and start huntin' a fight. He done it in his maiden race and in every other one after that."

"Well, how about the black he was runnin' with this mornin'? That looks like he's cured to me. A skyrocket tied to his tail, and a thousand bucks on his lily-white nose, is my hunch," persisted Abie.

Get-away sniffed his disdain. "You're figurin' about like the guy that owns him. I ain't never met the gent, but I hear he's long on hopes all the time. Just because a horse won't fight a stablemate on a dark mornin' is no license for judgin' him cured. Fat chance! You wait till you see him in a red-hot finish with a strange black. You'll get an eyeful then."

"You're goofy. A skyrocket tied to his tail and a thousand beans on his lily-white nose," reiterated Abie.

"Aw, gwan to the madhouse," rasped Get-away, as he sauntered toward the door.

THE girl in furs sitting at an adjoining table leaned anxiously toward her companion.

"Is it true, Alan?" she asked, a trace of wistfulness in her manner.

His fine eyes smiled back at her, undiscouraged.

"Trust those hustlers to ferret out the truth, Mary. I'll have to admit that his deductions hit the mark rather closely. Most of my assets are represented in

Rordigan colts, and, as he said, they are a drug on the market. One big winning by Rordigan Prince would start the sale of them. That winning largely hinges on our success in breaking him of his habit of fighting when he gets hot. And I believe our morning workouts are helping," he added hopefully.

"Do you plan to start him here?" she asked.

Alan nodded. "Yes, tomorrow. Not in hopes of winning, but more as a test to see if his disposition is sweetening up any. The big test will come next month at Delmont. He is entered in the seven furlong free-for-all. If he wins, or even places there, it means that I can sell out clean, leave the track, and then——" Alan Haynes' eyes finished the sentence and his hand sought the girl's underneath the table.

THE following afternoon Mary Coulter and the owner of the Haynes stables watched Rordigan Prince stage his comeback. They saw him, after a poor bit of riding at the start, fight his way to a position among the leaders and take the rail at the three-quarter post. Then, with a commanding lead, they saw him break his stride, and, despite his jockey's efforts, turn savagely on a black horse in the trailing bunch.

That night, responding to the repeated encores of a crowded house, the Irish linnet sang "Kathleen Mavourneen." Poignant, grieving, as if voicing the sadness of the singer's heart, the melody rang forth. The vast audience settled back in its seat with a sigh of anticipation. Here was a bit of the exquisite pathos for which Mary Coulter was noted.

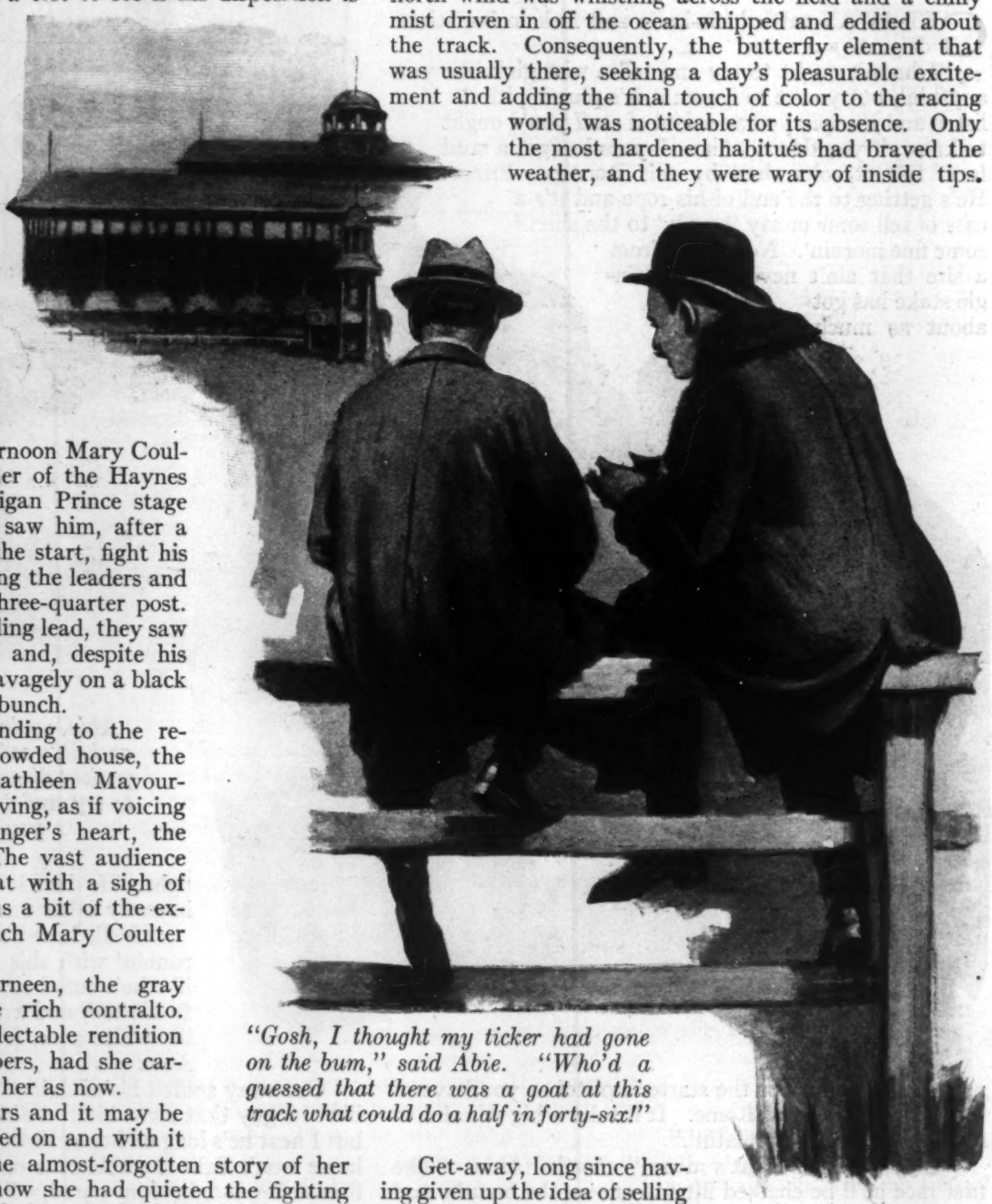
"Kathleen Mavourneen, the gray dawn," throbbed the rich contralto. Never, even in the delectable rendition of more classical numbers, had she carried her audience with her as now.

"It may be for years and it may be forever," the song flowed on and with it came to the singer the almost-forgotten story of her mother's wooing and how she had quieted the fighting lust of Rordigan King before the Irish Derby. And in that minute a plan was born in Mary Coulter's brain. So, with the light of future happiness brightening her eyes and the implicit faith in the legend lightening her heart, the Irish linnet finished her song and smiled her way from the stage.

It was the third day's racing at Delmont—the day that was to mark Rordigan Prince's final tilt with destiny, and make or break Alan Haynes. The Get-away Kid and Abie the Tout lounged idly through the infiltering crowd, eyes peeled for a prospective angel. Despite the fact that this day's card flaunted the names of the élite among the bangtails, pickings promised to be exceedingly lean for the brethren who dealt in sure-thing tips.

In the first place, thanks to overmuch newspaper notoriety, the favorites carried all the sucker money, and, for once, the talent had adjudged them worthy of the burden. So, trying to retail any stable chatter or inside dope was like carrying coals to Newcastle.

In the second place, it wasn't a real racing day, anyway. Old Boreas, before holing up for the summer, was making a blasty attempt at a comeback. A raw north wind was whistling across the field and a chilly mist driven in off the ocean whipped and eddied about the track. Consequently, the butterfly element that was usually there, seeking a day's pleasurable excitement and adding the final touch of color to the racing world, was noticeable for its absence. Only the most hardened habitués had braved the weather, and they were wary of inside tips.



"Gosh, I thought my ticker had gone on the bum," said Abie. "Who'd a guessed that there was a goat at this track what could do a half in forty-six!"

Get-away, long since having given up the idea of selling any information he possessed —which meant no information at all—through force of habit, let his eyes wander down the afternoon's program. The act was purely mechanical. The names as well as the past records of the entrants were seared on his mind with photographic distinctness—had been for days, for that matter. Carded for the third race—a seven-furlong open event with the cream of the track entered—was a horse whose name brought a grin of derisive remembrance to Get-away's face.

"HEY, Abie," he hailed, yielding to a sudden facetious desire to torment his brother hustler, "I got a little hunch on the third race."

"Yeh," said Abie, his eyes busy searching the crowd.

"Go ahead then. Shoot and get it offen your chest."

Get-away moved a little closer and lowered his voice to a confidential murmur.

"Well, here it is and it ain't goin' to cost you a cent. Rordigan Prince, the steppin'-up baby, at twenty-five to one. A whiz-bang tied to his tail and a thousand smackers plastered to the end of his snoot! You could retire and start a pawn shop on that!"

ABIE was flooded with the unpleasant recollection of what had happened a month previous. He tenderly caressed a small scar above one temple, a souvenir left by a certain obstreperous better who, after paying Abie good money for this selfsame tip, had watched Rordigan Prince turn a perfectly good race into a running fight.

"Aw, take that line to the graveyard," he retorted. "Can't you never forgit anything?"

A low-slung gray roadster driven by a girl drew clear from the stream of incoming vehicles, and stopped. The driver leaned back in her seat and scanned the crowd searchingly. Then, her eyes lighting with a look of recognition, she raised a gloved hand and beckoned to Get-away. Biting off a scathing rejoinder, Get-away winked at his companion and sauntered idly toward the car.

"I was sure I would find some one here whom I knew," the girl greeted him, as he drew near. "I wonder if I might persuade you to act as betting commissioner for me this afternoon, Get-away."

The Get-away Kid stepped viciously on one toe to assure himself that he was not the victim of a sudden hallucination. Once or twice, after a protracted session with the galloping dominoes, topped off by a heavy after-midnight supper, he had experienced delightful golden nightmares. And only last night he had flirted with the ivory cubes. But at such times it was always some stranger of the male persuasion who had commissioned him to place all the wealth of Midas on a certain long shot—said long shot afterward romping home with his tail up. Fairy princesses had never figured in these fantastic dreams. Get-away had always held the opposite sex in considerable awe. He admitted he was no good at doping out the fillies and, furthermore, they had no place in his particular scheme of existence. So he eyed the girl in the car a trifle distrustfully. She lifted her veil with a charming smile.

"Surely you haven't forgotten me, Get-away."

NEXT to the everlasting thrill of the circular tracks, the lure of the footlights appealed most strongly to Get-away. In his flush periods he swanked it in the pit; in times of adversity he was a dyed-in-the-wool gallery god. And he played no favorites. Depending largely on the state of his finances, he ran the gamut from the three-a-day to grand opera. Like all devoted fans he had his idols and their faces were etched indelibly on his memory. Get-away's jaw slackened and his eyes grew round. No dream was ever like this.

"The Irish linnet," he breathed softly.

An almost imperceptible nod answered him.

"But think further back than that, Get-away."

Like a flash his thoughts raced back over past years; his memory strings vibrated, then struck a full chord.

"Mary Coulter—Phil Coulter's kid. Ain't I the dumb-bell, though?"

"Good boy," she said. "Now will you act for me—on ten per cent? I—I will have other things to do myself."

Spurred by the remembrance of Phil Coulter's open-handed liberality toward the waifs of the track, the Get-away Kid's sense of chivalry rose sublimely to the occasion.

"Sure, Miss Mary, I'm at your service. But not at no ten per cent."

The Irish linnet hesitated, frowning.

"That is more than is customary—at least, it always used to be——"

"You get me wrong, lady," Get-away interrupted. "I knew Phil Coulter in the old days, when I was just a kid. They wasn't no ten per cent between me and him when I was hungry."

Mary Coulter repaid this tribute with a smile. From a bag she drew forth a roll of bills that caused Get-away to harken back to the time Phil Coulter was the despair and the bugaboo of the entire book-making gentry.

"I'll leave it to your good judgment how to distribute this. It's bound to force the odds down—some. But I want it all on one horse." When she named her choice Get-away emitted a long shrill cry of protest.

"Not that goat, ma'am. Take it from me and lay offen that dog! He ain't never shoved a whisker inside the money in his life."

The Irish linnet bent out of the car and talked long and earnestly. Slowly the cloud of dismay that had shadowed the hustler's face dissipated and a sort of a glorified belief took its place.

"I'll say it's a hunch, a regular old-time, sure-thing tip. And when you got that, kind lady, I say play it—play it to the limit. We'll shake them machines so they'll rattle like a selling-plater gee-hawing down the back stretch. I'll need a little help to pull this right, but you leave it to me, Miss Mary."

THE driver of the gray car nodded and threw in the clutch. Get-away slid across to where Abie stood, hopefully scanning the crowd.

"Abie," he said, "I'm going to give you a gentleman's job this afternoon." He shoved part of the roll in Abie's hand. "A skyrocket tied to his tail and a thousand bucks on his lily-white nose. Here's where we win back the old homestead and start the wedding bells ringing. Come on." Taking the dumfounded hustler's arm, Get-away steered him toward the betting ring.

When the saddling bell rang for the seven-furlong free-for-all, Alan Haynes was voicing his final instructions to the jockey who was slated to ride Rordigan Prince.

"It's make or break with us, kid. You have an even chance, if you can carry the Prince into the stretch. Let him run his own race till you get to the three-quarters pole, then go to work on him. If you can keep him running till you get him straightened out for the wire, he'll finish all right."

The jockey nodded soberly. "I'll give him hell at the turn, Mr. Alan. He's fit to run over the moon right now, if I can keep him in the race."

Haynes pressed a small slip of green cardboard into the diminutive rider's hand.

"Put this in your boot, son," he directed. "It isn't a whole lot, but it will give you something to ride for."

By the time the entrants for the seven-furlong free-for-all had straggled down the home stretch toward the barrier, the Get-away Kid and Abie the Tout, their work done, had fought to a position on the top rail directly opposite the judges' stand. Get-away had yielded to the mesmeric influence of the Irish linnet's hunch. Along with the money that she had entrusted him to wager, he had placed his own—down to the last nickel. Get-away, like the true sport that he was, would either go hungry or make the biggest killing of his long and variegated career. Abie, still smarting under the double-cross Rordigan Prince had handed him the month previous, had

withstood any temptation to bet and virtuously buttoned his jeans.

But, being true gypsies of the track, the same thrill, the same alluring, tantalizing sense of uncertainty gripped them both. In chill, strained expectancy they watched the restless, squirming tangle of horseflesh weave and surge behind the webbing. In unison with the anxious crowd, they heaved a sigh of relief when the webbing was sprung. Together with the rest they raised their voices in the age-old shout, "They're off!"

Never in a lifetime of excitement, never in his long career as a stormy petrel of of the tracks, had the Get-away Kid suffered such delightful agonies of suspense. Locked in a bunch as if running under a tent, horses and riders alike indistinguishable in the gray mist that swirled across the track—it was a ding-dong race from the jump-off. Not until the half-mile marker was passed could the race-crazed crowd distinguish favorite from outsider.

"Paloma, Paloma!" raved a delirious backer. "Paloma for a thousand!"

"Babe Stratton, Babe Stratton!" A lusty-lunged individual bellowed forth his choice. "Look, look at the little black run. Come on! Come on! Come on!"

BUT no roaring shouts of encouragement, no high-pitched entreaties were hurled at the third horse of the trio that was gradually forging to the front. Neither the grandstand nor the talent had money on the long shot, and the Get-away Kid—he was hysterically praying for the first time since he had left his mother's side.

Such a race! Such furor! Whipping through a curtain of eddying fog, they made the turn and thundered into the stretch. Paloma, the favorite, hugging the rail; Babe Stratton, nobly carrying her share of the money, fighting neck and neck—and a rank outsider, a seven-year-old, who had never graced a winner's circle, challenging the pair.

Rising on tiptoes, the talent gathered itself for that supreme vocal effort necessary to catapult a winner under the wire. But it was not with any thought of cheering the outsider. There would be only two fighting it out at the finish. It was time now for the despised hound to break and stage his usual fiasco. And to the wise birds it seemed as if it was about to happen. Rordigan Prince was wickedly rolling his eyes and pulling at the wraps. At every lunging jump his neck flexed snakily. With the Prince it was a sign of danger ahead.

Then, unheard by the conglomerate mixture of race-mad humanity in the stand, unheard by the Get-away Kid praying feverishly on the top rail, rang out a voice from a low-slung gray roadster parked close to the three-quarters post. And it was a voice that had enthralled thousands, a voice that could charm the birds from the trees, the well-loved contralto of the Irish linnet.

"Kathleen Mavourneen, the gray dawn is breaking—" the sweet old song pealed forth, throbbing, billowing, piercing the staccato drumbeat of hoofs like a mellow bugle. It was as if some enveloping mantle had magically been cast over Rordigan Prince. Hot, lather-streaked, the ungovernable lust for combat working insidiously in his brain, he seemed suddenly to relax. Some dormant memory chord seemed to tremble into life, stretching far back into the past. The voice seemed to soothe and calm him, allay the mad, insane desire for fight that possessed his brain.

"Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?" The calming words rolled forth with a haunting poignancy.

It was the song of a woman fighting to gain and save her mate. Undreamed of, unheard by the tumultuous concourse in the stands, only the Get-away Kid could have guessed what it was that steadied the horse.

Slam bang, hammer and tongs, whistling whip and drubbing heels in the mad welter of a hair-raising finish, the three horses pelted down the stretch. Neck and neck, nose and nose, whisker and whisker, it drew the cheering, shouting, bangtail enthusiasts to their toes, did this unforeseen, unexpected, heartbreaking finish. Fifty yards, thirty yards, ten yards—and as the last strains of "Kathleen Mavourneen" broke away in a choking, husky whisper, so was the bedlam that possessed the stands stilled. No acclaiming plaudits greet the conqueror when a rank outsider, unsung, unbacked, wins by an eyelash. So only one voice acclaimed Rordigan Prince.

"GOOD-BY, sheriff! Hello, dollars! What price Rordigan colts now?" Abie, in a sudden access of enthusiasm, raised the taunting war cry.

The Get-away Kid tumbled backward off the top rail, dragging the yipping Abie with him.

"Come on you!" he cried. [*Continued on page* 127]

One of J. J. Gould's attractive illustrations for

Confusion of Tongues

By Phoebe H. Gilkyson

In Next Month's McClure's

A DELIGHTFUL story of young lovers temperamentally at swords' points; and of a thrilling adventure in a quiet garden with an outcome that makes the old judge murmur: "I suppose they think they've invented all that stuff—but it's older than Babel, older than Babel itself."

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American colonists—men, women and children, recruited in the United States—bound for the Kuzbas Concession in Siberia

A Red Fiasco

My Adventures in the Kuzbas Colony and Final Escape from the Bolsheviki.

By Edmund J. Maguire

As Related to Harry A. Mount

Edmund J. Maguire

NEARLY every one knows now that when the arm of the law finally reached out and halted his insidious activities, William D.—Big Bill—Haywood, former secretary of the I. W. W., jumped a $50,000 bail bond in Chicago and fled to Russia. His return to this country was not so loudly heralded.

He did not return in person, mind you, but his agents were here and "Big Bill's" name was mentioned only very, very privately. It was just about a year ago that I first heard of "Kuzbas." I read of the organization in a feature article in a New York newspaper, that told how a group of Americans had obtained from the Soviet Government a huge concession in Siberia and were in the United States to gather a group of engineers and skilled workers to share in the management.

I had seen something of Siberia and its enormous and almost untouched natural resources as a member of the army of occupation which the United States maintained in Siberia for some time after the Armistice. I had always been of an adventurous nature and the prospect fascinated me. I wrote to Kuzbas and after a deal of correspondence I finally interviewed H. S. Calvert, one of Haywood's "salesmen," received some printed literature, and made application to join "Kuzbas."

"Kuzbas" is an abbreviation of Kuznets Basin, the region in western Siberia where the concession lay. As one of their pamphlets glowingly stated, "Kuzbas is an autonomous industrial colony for American Engineers and workers for Soviet Russia.

"The plan is"—to quote further from the pamphlet—"to develop Concession Number One offered to World capitalists—the Kuznets Coal and Iron Basin with its two hundred and fifty billion tons of coal, its iron ore, timber and agricultural land, and to operate Nadejdenski Zavod—zavod means factory or plant—a complete steel plant in the northeastern Urals, which in pre-war days produced 20 per cent of the total steel and cast iron of the Urals, being the biggest producer of charcoal pig iron in the world."

Three months at Nadejdenski Zavod dispelled any illusions I might have had about the enterprise. At the end of that time—August 1, 1922—the American colonists at Nadejdenski and at the coal mines of Kemorovo, about a thousand miles north, numbered about three hundred. I say Americans because they came from America, but scarcely any of them could speak intelligible English and nearly all had been members of radical organizations in this country. All were supposed to be engineers and skilled workmen, but with the exception of about six, they had obtained their technical training swinging picks and shovels in America.

The first intimation I had that Haywood had any connection with the colony was upon the arrival of our ship in Petrograd, when Haywood rushed aboard to greet

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All American workers in Kemorovo are obliged to drill, Big Bill Haywood himself serving as a private in the ranks

us, and at the very first opportunity—within my hearing—bullied our treasurer into giving him $250 from our emergency fund for "personal expenses."

I had seen enough of misery and suffering behind the battle lines in France to satiate any man, and I saw the beginning of the Russian debacle with the American army of occupation in Siberia, after the Armistice. But the Russia of today proved a chamber of horrors beside which these experiences were mild indeed.

The Russia of Today a Chamber of Horrors

A SINGLE instance may suffice to prove this. On the way from Petrograd to Nadejdenski Zavod our box-car train stopped for three days at Perm while a search was made for an engine powerful enough to pull us up into the mountains. One day as I stood at the station, near what appeared to be a bomb-proof dugout, two women walked toward me with a stretcher on which was carelessly flung the naked body of a young girl. They walked to the dugout, opened the door, and literally dumped the body inside.

I looked and saw that the dugout was *nearly full* of dead bodies! I found that the dead were taken from the trains as they pulled into the station, and with those who had died on the station platform and in the station during the night, were stripped of their clothing—even rags are too precious to throw away in Russia—and piled in the dugout until fifty or sixty bodies were accumulated. Then they were thrown into a cart and hauled away to be buried. There was a cartload every two or three days. This, mind you, was in the summer of the Year of Our Lord, 1922, when the worst of famine conditions in Russia were past.

Hope died at Nadejdenski Zavod. The factory is complete, all right—a complete wreck. Roofs are either missing entirely or so leaky that they are useless, and the machinery is rusted beyond repair. By some miracle one blast furnace has been kept going and a part of one rolling mill. About five thousand Russians are at work doing the work of a hundred men, turning out iron strips which are of no use whatever, but the workers listlessly continue to turn them out because of the one law which is fanatically enforced in Russia: "No work, no food." The pay for this work is a daily *pyok* or ration, consisting of a pound of black bread and a little tea.

The mines at Kemorovo were no better off, for they were flooded and it would take years of intensive effort before they could be gotten into production.

Bad food and impossible living conditions soon brought me down with a fever and I was left too weak for physical labor. But Von Hoffen gave me some clerical work to do, since I owned one of the two typewriters in the town. Through this means I learned that Haywood and his associates really had no concession at all, but only the promise of a concession if they should meet a set of conditions which seemed impossible. I had signed an agreement, as had the other colonists, to work two years without pay, with the promise of a big bonus at the end of that time.

With the prospect of a bonus gone glimmering, I decided to make a break for freedom, no matter what the result, rather than face death or worse at Nadejdenski Zavod in the ominous winter ahead. I made several requests for transportation to Moscow, and finally got to Von Hoffen, the "chief engineer" at Nadejdenski Zavod. At the conclusion of a three-hour interview Von Hoffen said, with an air of finality:

"Well, Mack, the truth is we can't pay your way to Moscow. We have no funds."

"All right, then," I said. "I'll walk!"

Von Hoffen threw back his head and forced a boisterous laugh.

"Walk! Why, man, it's three thousand miles to Moscow. Winter is nearly here, there is no food to be had on the way, and besides you'd only succeed in getting into the first jail you came to." He began pacing up and down the room. "You might even get in jail," he added significantly, "before you get out of this town."

"At least," I said, "I am going to try it. I'd as soon starve on the road to Moscow as starve here. I've often wondered what the inside of a Russian jail was like and, anyway, if I get in one, it will give me a good chance to learn the language."

"Well, if you've bound to try it, go ahead. But I can't help you."

"All right," I said. "Good-by!"

I Leave Nadejdenski Zavod

WHEN I returned to my shack, I told Collins, one of the colonists, of my decision to leave and he at once agreed to go along. I sold my typewriter and all my other possessions to the interpreter for twenty dollars. Collins spread out all of his things on the bed and we called in some of the Russians. A sort of rummage sale netted us twenty-seven million *rubles*—about five dollars.

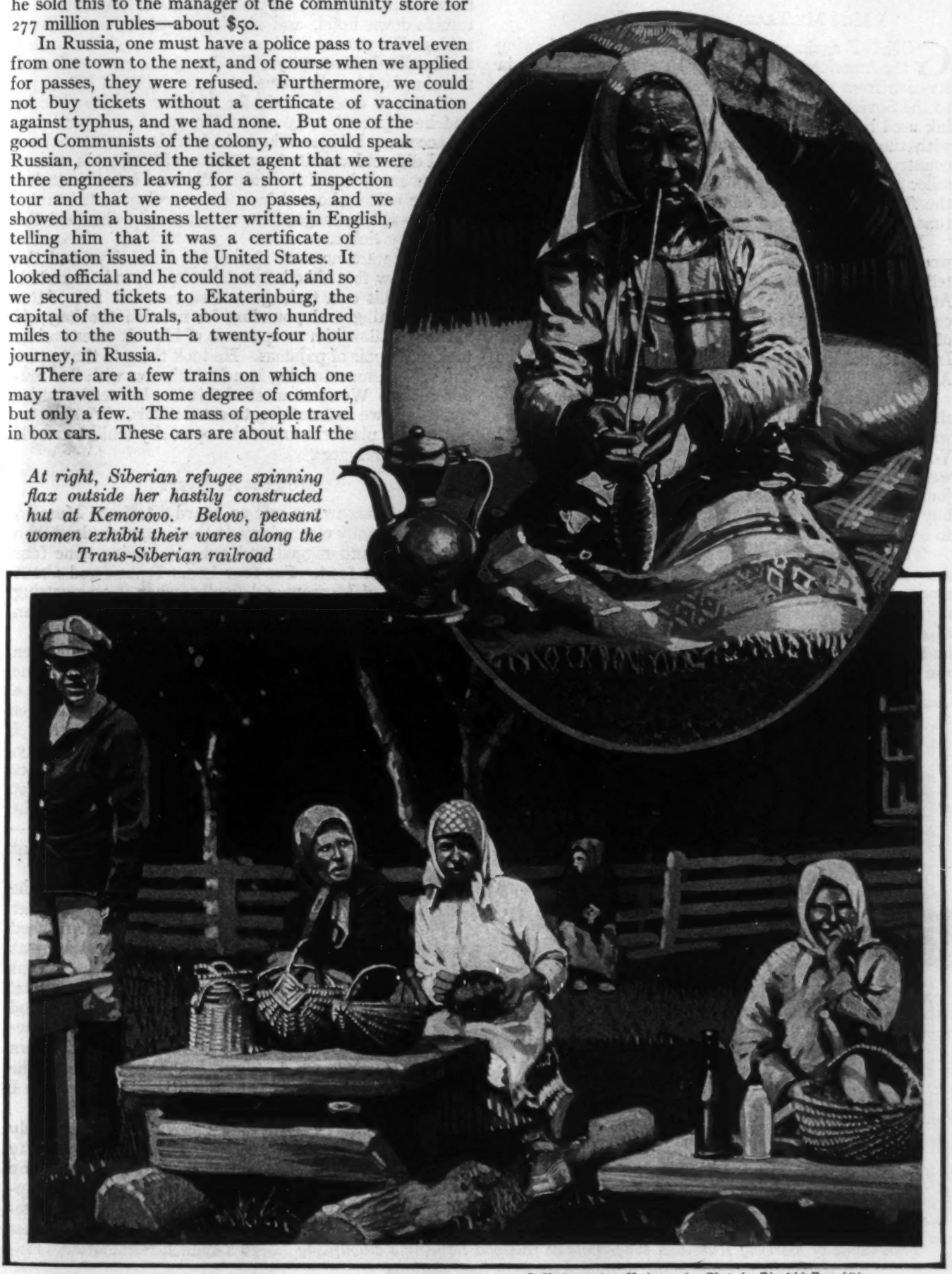
Word spread that we intended to leave and early next

morning Pete Gonaff, a big Bulgarian, came in from the lumber camp, bag and baggage, to join us. I think if we had made the effort, we could have organized a Coxey's Army for a march on Moscow. Gonaff could speak Russian and we were glad to have him. He had an outfit which had cost him about $800 in the States and he sold this to the manager of the community store for 277 million rubles—about $50.

In Russia, one must have a police pass to travel even from one town to the next, and of course when we applied for passes, they were refused. Furthermore, we could not buy tickets without a certificate of vaccination against typhus, and we had none. But one of the good Communists of the colony, who could speak Russian, convinced the ticket agent that we were three engineers leaving for a short inspection tour and that we needed no passes, and we showed him a business letter written in English, telling him that it was a certificate of vaccination issued in the United States. It looked official and he could not read, and so we secured tickets to Ekaterinburg, the capital of the Urals, about two hundred miles to the south—a twenty-four hour journey, in Russia.

There are a few trains on which one may travel with some degree of comfort, but only a few. The mass of people travel in box cars. These cars are about half the size of an American box car and have two tiers of wide shelves arranged around the inside walls, with a narrow aisle between.

Men, women and children pile into these spaces indiscriminately. Indeed, one is lucky to find a place on a shelf. All Russia is traveling; coming from no place



At right, Siberian refugee spinning flax outside her hastily constructed hut at Kemorovo. Below, peasant women exhibit their wares along the Trans-Siberian railroad

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in particular and going wherever the train takes them; just traveling with the hope that some place they will find a haven from their misery.

At Ekaterinburg we had to wait three days for a train to Moscow. This is the town where the Czar and his family are said to have been murdered.

I Miss My Train and Meet a Friend

GONAFF again managed to get tickets, by showing the American letter and my letter of introduction in Russian from the Kuzbas representatives in New York to the Soviet authorities. It had a signature in the red ink used by Russian officialdom and had been stamped with the official police stamp upon entrance into the country. It looked official, too, and luckily the ticket seller could not even read Russian. In fact, very few of the Russian soldiers or officials can read or write, fortunately for us.

I am not going to detail the experiences of the two weeks' trip to Moscow. But one or two incidents I must tell because they have a bearing on what happened later. At Perm, Collins left us to await another party of colonists, in the hope that there would be mail for some of us. He intended to beat his way into Moscow on the International Express, and to meet Gonaff and me at the American Relief station.

At Viatka, I struck up an acquaintance with a Russian army officer, who could speak broken English. He was being transferred from Siberia to Petrograd. At Vologda, we changed trains for Petrograd, and while we were waiting for an engine to make the final lap of the journey, I walked over to the bazaar, or market place, to buy some tobacco. I returned to the station just in time to see the rear of the train disappearing down the tracks!

The thought entered my mind that at last I should see what the inside of a Russian jail looked like, and as I stood ruefully looking after the train, a hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned and caught sight of the uniform of a Russian officer. My heart sank. Then he spoke, and, to my surprise and delight, I discovered that it was the Russian officer I had come to know on the train!

He had been wounded and had gone to a hospital to have the wound dressed and also had missed the train. Luckily, he had his baggage on the station platform, but was without any money. I had about eight million rubles left in my pocket, and after a conference we decided to find a hotel for the night, since there were no more trains that day. We checked his baggage, found a tumble-down hotel, and hired a room for five million rubles. We were obliged to leave all our credentials with the landlord as security. We bought a meal and next morning had barely enough to pay the hotel bill.

I was to catch a train for Moscow at nine o'clock, and he expected to go on to Petrograd an hour later. He accompanied me to the train, but there we discovered that I did not have all of my ticket and the guards refused to allow me to board the train. We went into the station and the officer shouted in Russian and pounded tables with his fist for a good hour, but finally obtained the rest of my ticket.

There were no more trains for three days and the officer knew that if he left me, I would soon be arrested. So he let his own train go and stayed with me. After more shouting and pounding he induced the baggage master to allow him to open one of his suit cases and he took out a pair of pajamas. He took these to the bazaar and sold them, returning in a few minutes with five million rubles. We spent most of this for *chi*—tea—and for three days we had nothing to eat but this. We slept on the station platform under the open sky amidst crowds of starving refugees.

Moscow At Last!

AT last he saw me safe on board a train to Moscow, and I finally reached my destination, more dead than alive, dirty and ragged and hungry, having gone four days without food. For four hours I wandered about the streets of Moscow and finally, when it was getting dark, I stumbled upon a sign in English: "American Relief Administration."

I could have shouted with joy, for I could then scarcely drag one foot after the other. At last I saw one of the officials. I asked for a job, anything that would get me to Petrograd, so that I might get out of the country. He could not take the chance of complication with the Soviet authorities that this might involve, but gave me a meal—the first and the last decent meal I had in Russia.

As I started out of the office, whom should I meet but Collins! He had reached Moscow before me and was there looking for me. Collins was staying at the "Hotel Sedome," a sort of refugee hotel maintained by the Soviet Government in an old tumble-down shack on the banks of the Moscow River. For a week I stayed with Collins.

I now realized that my only chance of escape was to get to Petrograd and stow away on some outgoing steamer. Appeal to Haywood would probably have brought my career to a sudden termination. Fin-

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Thousands of starving Russians congregate at railroad terminals attempting to obtain passage to the nearest American food stations

Photo above by International News Reel

Photo by Ziegfeld Expedition from U. & U.

Above, the docks at Petrograd where Macguire made his escape

At left, a group of women coal miners of Nadejdenski, Siberia

ally Collins and I found an American oil man at the Hotel Savoy. He heard my story and advised me to sell the information to an American newspaper correspondent who was in Moscow. I withhold the names of these men because they are still in Russia, and because this narrative probably will be examined with a great deal of interest by the Soviet authorities. I did sell the story of my adventures, and received fifty million rubles for it.

By this time Collins had found work of some sort and had decided to stay. That very evening I managed to get a ticket again by the use of my bogus credentials and next morning was in Petrograd.

I was bewildered to find that I had not seen that part of Petrograd before, but after walking about for a short time, I saw a street car. I got on it, hoping it would take me past some familiar place. I recognized no landmarks, however, until the car reached the end of the line, when, to my astonishment, I saw the docks and standing there, before my eyes, was an American steamer *The Eastern Star*. I had been told in Moscow that this steamer was expected and that it would be the last American steamer to leave Russia before the harbor froze up. I *had* to get aboard that ship.

But this was not such an easy task as I had hoped. The dock was surrounded by a high brick wall, through which there was only one gate. This gate was guarded by six "checkas," or secret police, and beyond, pacing up and down the docks, I could see more soldiers.

Luck and my letter of introduction had carried me thus far and I decided to tempt fate once more. I walked boldly up to the gate and showed my letter.

"*Rebotay ara*,"—I work for the American Relief—I said.

American radicals now in Russia. From left to right, they are William Shatoff, Bill Haywood and George Andreytchine. Shatoff, once New York anarchist, is now police commissioner in Petrograd

Again my magical letter worked and I passed through the gate. I walked straight up the gangplank of the ship and handed the soldier stationed there my letter and repeated:

"*Rebotay ara.*"

But this time it didn't work.

"*Probst*—Pass—*Probst!*" he said.

He indicated that I must go to a little guardhouse at the corner of the dock and secure a pass before I could board the ship. I pretended not to understand, until he placed the point of his bayonet against my stomach.

"*Uk udee!*—Get out!—*Uk udee!*" he shouted.

I Am Sent to the Guardhouse

THIS was plain enough and there was nothing to do but go to the guardhouse and ask the Russian officer in charge for a *probst.* This time I thought it best to change my story and I told the officer, by means of signs and the few Russian words I had picked up, that I worked aboard the ship and had lost my pass. When at last he understood he grunted an order to follow him and we went aboard and sought out the captain. I stepped close to the captain and said, under my breath:

"I'm an American, captain. Tell them you know me!"

"I know this man," said the captain. "What do you want?"

I could have hugged him! But my triumph was short-lived, for when the captain finally understood that I claimed to be a member of the crew, he said flatly that I was not. I must have shown my dejection at this, for one of the crew, a little, wiry Irishman, slipped over to me.

"What's the matter, Buddy?" he said. "Out of luck?"

"Clear out of luck!" I responded.

"Can I do anything?" he asked.

"Sure!" I said. "Go to the American Relief and ask them to try to get me out of this."

He nodded assent and slipped away. The Russian officer took me back to the guardhouse and there I remained until eight o'clock that night. Once the little Irish sailor slipped over and handed me a package of American cigarettes. His name, he said, was Jimmy Jonas. At eight a tug drew up to the dock, I was placed aboard and taken up into the center of the city and placed in a jail. I was, indeed, in the very depths of despair.

That night I slept on a wooden bench and awoke stiff and sore—sore in mind and body. A guard came by and threw a piece of black bread through the bars, as one would throw a piece of meat to a caged animal. I seized the bread and hurled it back at him with all my might, and barely missed his head.

Again I Meet My Russian Friend

IN a little while two soldiers came and opened the cell door, placed me between them and marched off through the bare corridors of the building and into one of the upstairs rooms. If I had been going to my execution, I think I would have felt about the same. My mind simply had ceased to function. [*Continued on page* 127]

A Tale of Two Mighty Champions With But a Single Fear

Strayed But Not Forgotten

By John G. Brandon

Illustrations by Marshall Frantz

With Barrington and his confederate, expatiating with much richness of gesture, was the carping critic I was seeking!

WE live in stirring times, but not quite so hectic, I think, as when I introduced Foley to an admiring world. You remember Foley, of course? Best heavy weight that ever—— Well, no matter. I still recollect his first appearance on my horizon—that soft, bashful tap upon my office door, so timid and gentle that I thought that I must have forgotten to pay the weekly stipend of one of the charladies—the only variety of *femina* to be found near any training quarters in which I reign supreme.

I growled admittance; he entered, and I beheld him. Towering above me was a man who looked as if he could whip anything on two feet—a world-beater, if ever I saw one. The height, the prodigious breadth of shoulder, the great chest, the enormous ham-like hands that dangled about his knees, the bull neck supporting the bronzed, bony face with its thatch of upstanding, fiery red hair, the cast-iron jaw—

"Be seated," I invited, waving a hand toward the armchair. "And what can I do for you, Mr.—er,——"

"Foley my name is," he responded simply, filling that commodious piece of furniture to repletion. "I want a fight. Best you've got'll do. I like 'em rough and I like 'em tough. If any one of your lot can put me down, I'll give him a fiver myself. That's fair, ain't it?" he asked anxiously.

Considering some of the heavy-weight talent I had in my string, it was more than fair—it was magnanimous.

"Do I understand that you want a try-out with a view to business?" I began tentatively. "I—I can't recall your ring record just for the moment, Mr. Foley."

"You'd have a job," he returned, with the most charming naïveté. "Never had a glove fight in me life—not serious. All my scrappin's been done with the raw-uns. Shearers, roustabouts, bullockies, an' them sort of blokes. I'm an Aussie," he explained, with considerable pride. "Got left behind on purpose when my mob went back, to have a look round like."

"Been sizing up some of our champions?" I suggested.

"I'll beat any three of 'em one after another," Mr. Foley informed me, with conviction. "I got two hundred quid that says I can and that's *dinkum*. Got something

else, too," he added, winking mysteriously and nodding.

"Indeed?" I had a sudden conviction that Fortune was squeezed into the armchair opposite me. "Indeed!"

"A dinny-hazer," he informed me in a tone of tremendous import. "A bonzer!"

I looked blank, I suppose; must have, for he proceeded at once to shed light upon my darkness. A "dinny-hazer," it appeared, was an almighty wallop, in the vernacular of the Bush. A devastating punch that terminated the opponent's interest in the proceedings on the instant.

"And what is your particular punch, and in which hand do you pack it?" I inquired.

"NOW that's the funny part about it," he explained slowly. "I don't know. Just seems to come natural like at the right time—either hand. It ain't a scientific punch," he apologized gravely, "because I ain't got no science. You'll have to learn me. I just clout 'em and they flop—an' *stop* flopped. They used to call my punch 'Forget-me-not' up the Riverina, because the blokes that got it never came back no more—they didn't forget it." He grinned upon me in an abashed way. "It's a—a kind of a joke, see? 'Forget-me-not'—and they never. Anyhow, they never come back. A punch like that ought to do pretty good here, don't y' think?"

Hastening to assure him that if this unsophisticated variety of punch in any way came up to description, it was bound to earn golden opinions in these northern climes, I led him into the gymnasium—a dwelling house of sorrow popularly known among my retinue as "The Slaughter House." At the time Bill Rivetts was winding up for a fight a week from that date, and at that moment he and "Punch" Thrippy—my working trainer and masseur—were in the ring doing a fast work-out. A really good second-rater, Rivetts, as game and vicious a fighter at around one hundred and ninety pounds as could be found.

Mr. Foley had said he liked 'em rough and he liked 'em tough. He couldn't have been better suited, I felt sure, than with Rivetts—a bad lad with the rough stuff; a person entirely devoid of conscience.

While I gave Rivetts a brief résumé of our visitor's requirements, that gentleman divested himself of his upper garments. He was a wholesome sight for vegetarians, wowsers, and other such kill-joy animalculæ. Never have I seen a back, torso, and arms so gnarled, knotted, and bossed with muscle as those exhibited by Mr. Foley.

The gentleman from the Riverina was soon ready. He clambered into the ring; with a glance at my stop watch, I clanged upon the gong.

INSTANTLY Rivetts crept out of his corner, touched the extreme tip of Mr. Foley's glove, and circled around him like a menacing tiger. There was nothing tigerish to be observed about our visitor's poise—a bull bogged in the mud was more what he suggested. He had no guard whatsoever and he used a curious outswing of his gorilla-like right arm, which left him as open as the portals of a Cinema de luxe! My hopes diminished considerably.

And just then Rivetts landed two of the most vimful left and right hooks that have ever come under my notice. He put them in clean to the chin, and they would have staggered a brick wall. With a deep, dank sigh, I waited to see the recipient—and with him several brief roseate dreams of mine—come crashing to the floor. Not so Mr. Foley, however! That Antipodean warrior seemed quite unaware that anything disturbing had happened to him. I don't believe he even knew he'd been hit! But the next moment Mr. Rivetts did—oh, dear me, *yes!*

From some extraordinary and quite impossible angle Mr. Foley had literally *thrown* his gloved right fist, as a man might throw a half brick. It took Mr. William Rivetts immediately below the curve of his breast bone—and for seventeen minutes, twenty-five seconds, and two-fifths, that hardened ruffian studied the architecture of the ceiling through the whites of his eyes. It was an impressive sight. "Forget-me-not" was functioning with electrifying effectiveness!

We got Rivetts out of the ring and sat him upon a bench. Rivetts—that the best had never before been able to send even groggy! Oh, joy unspeakable! Oh, tempestuous happiness!

"Guv'nor," whispered Thrippy in awed tones, "this bloke's a world-beater!"

"I know that," I answered, trembling. "Jump in and keep him amused with the gloves while I play a cast-iron contract on the typewriter. But, as you are no good to me—dead, keep out of his way."

When I returned Mr. Foley was carrying the unconscious form of Thrippy from the ring, with the gentleness of an overgrown nursemaid. Mr. Rivetts was still deep in his inspection of the girders, his limpid orbs as yet minus the bright sparkle of intelligence. It was a moment of rare felicity.

FOR the two months that followed I kept the lurid-headed Foley absolutely dark, and intended doing so until we had instilled into him the sound principle that defense has its share in the science of boxing—a suggestion that hitherto he had treated with the most profound contempt.

By dint of superhuman perseverance and volumes of exotic language, he managed to evolve a protective scheme about ten times as damaging to his sparring partners as an ordinary man's attack. It consisted of an extraordinary series of physical contortions by which he seemed to present nothing but elbows to the foe. Flinty, granite-like projections which they had but to land upon full force—and exit with crippled hands and cash solatium!

Upon this touchy matter of sparring partners I flatter myself that I displayed considerable astuteness. Very early I realized that to permit a trail of more or less lame and halt boxers of note to depart from the gymnasium wherein Mr. Foley worked his spells would not answer. Such persons would talk; and the kind of effervescence they would emit had no part or place in my subtle tactics!

Therefore, I scoured the country for these unfortunate, but necessary appanages to Mr. Foley's advancement. Wherever I heard of heavy-weight boxers flowering profusely, there, before many days, did my genial smile and ingratiating manner appear. The bigger they were, the rougher and tougher, the more insidious my attentions; the more profuse my mendacious promises of gilt-edged careers in the roped arena. I developed quite a flair for this side of the business.

Size, height, weight, facial lineaments grave or gay, made no difference to the red-headed bloke from the Riverina. He smiled upon them as they came, battered them senseless without invidious distinctions, and grinned upon them as they girded up their aching loins for the homeward route again. Few paused to inquire his name and none from the sylvan retreats to which I consigned them for recuperation spread word of his prowess.

"Have you ever struck anything you were afraid of Foley?" I asked one day.

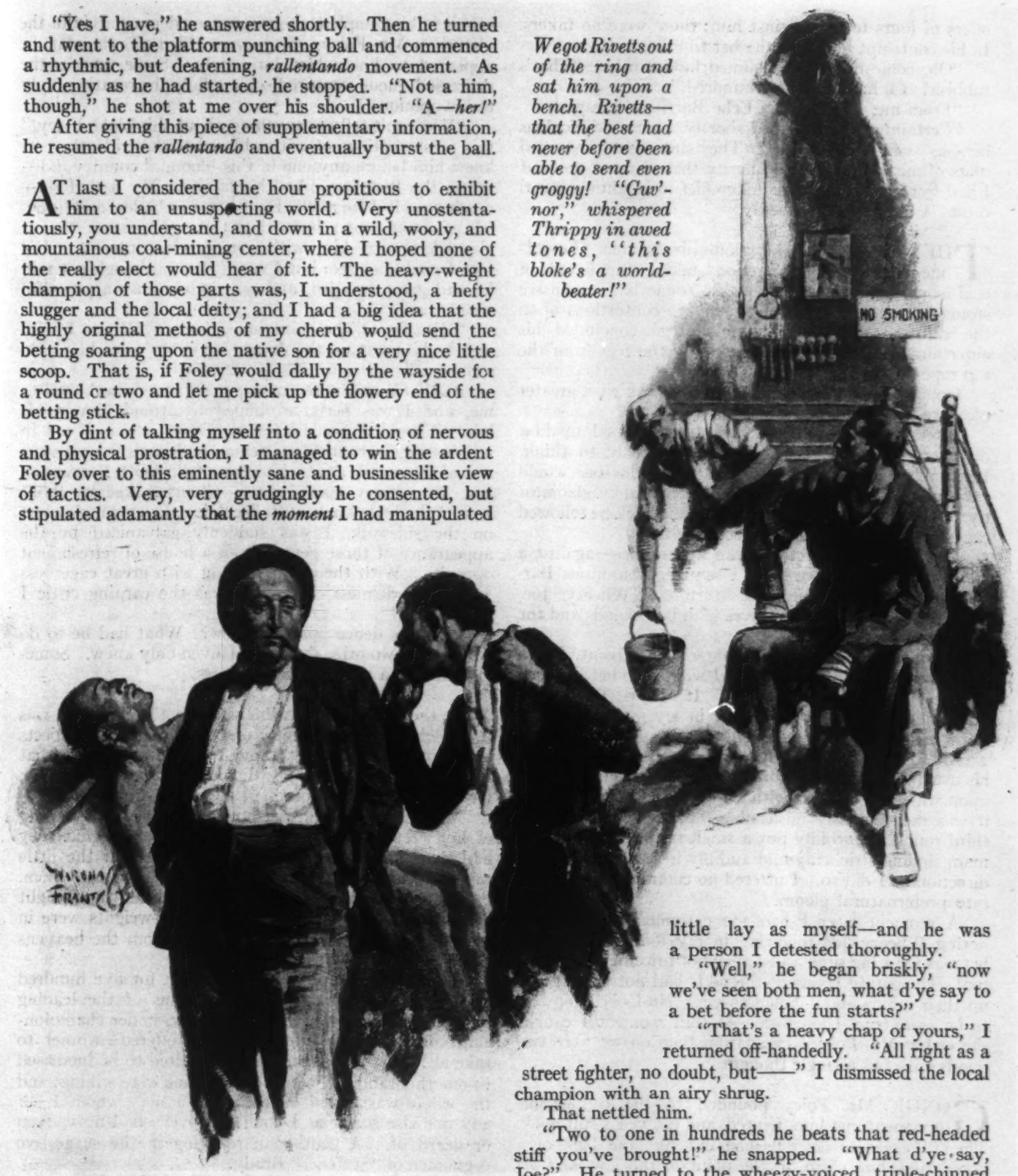
He regarded me thoughtfully for a moment.

"Yes I have," he answered shortly. Then he turned and went to the platform punching ball and commenced a rhythmic, but deafening, *rallentando* movement. As suddenly as he had started, he stopped. "Not a him, though," he shot at me over his shoulder. "A—*her!*"

After giving this piece of supplementary information, he resumed the *rallentando* and eventually burst the ball.

AT last I considered the hour propitious to exhibit him to an unsuspecting world. Very unostentatiously, you understand, and down in a wild, wooly, and mountainous coal-mining center, where I hoped none of the really elect would hear of it. The heavy-weight champion of those parts was, I understood, a hefty slugger and the local deity; and I had a big idea that the highly original methods of my cherub would send the betting soaring upon the native son for a very nice little scoop. That is, if Foley would dally by the wayside for a round or two and let me pick up the flowery end of the betting stick.

By dint of talking myself into a condition of nervous and physical prostration, I managed to win the ardent Foley over to this eminently sane and businesslike view of tactics. Very, very grudgingly he consented, but stipulated adamantly that the *moment* I had manipulated



We got Rivetts out of the ring and sat him upon a bench. Rivetts—that the best had never before been able to send even groggy! "Gw'-nor," whispered Thrippy in awed tones, "this bloke's a world-beater!"

la haute finance I was to blow my nose loudly; after which——

Following several uninteresting preliminary encounters, the local aspirant to the crown of Mr. Dempsey took the ring. I gave him my critical attention. He was a hewer of coal by profession, and weighed, I should think, some two hundred and thirty pounds—every ounce as hard and unyielding as the rock of his native mountains.

While I was engaged in perusing him two gentlemen plowed their way into the seats at my right hand. One of them I recognized as Alf Barrington, the backer and manager of Mr. Foley's mammoth adversary. Mr. Barrington, it was plain to see, was upon the same little lay as myself—and he was a person I detested thoroughly.

"Well," he began briskly, "now we've seen both men, what d'ye say to a bet before the fun starts?"

"That's a heavy chap of yours," I returned off-handedly. "All right as a street fighter, no doubt, but——" I dismissed the local champion with an airy shrug.

That nettled him.

"Two to one in hundreds he beats that red-headed stiff you've brought!" he snapped. "What d'ye say, Joe?" He turned to the wheezy-voiced, triple-chinned specimen of the genus bookmaker who accompanied him.

"I'll lay the same odds," wheezed that worthy.

"It's on," I said listlessly, making a note of the bet.

"Like it again?" questioned Wheezy Joe.

"I should," cut in Barrington, with a highly offensive snicker.

"Have it then," I responded.

I WILL pass over the first round with but one remark: Mr. Foley's slavish fidelity to orders was such that I was positively ashamed—even knowing what I knew—of having any connection with him whatsoever. Round two was worse, if anything; his exhibition was enough to make the gods laugh—or weep. Wheezy Joe yelled

offers of fours to one against him; there were no takers. In his contempt he raised the bet to fives.

"Oh, come now!" I exclaimed indignantly. "That's rubbish! I'll have that to a hundred."

"From me, too?" put in Echo Barrington, eagerly.

"Certainly," I responded shortly. "It's a ridiculous bet—as you'll discover." The statement provoked roars of mirth from both—hilarity that so upset me that I had to recourse to my handkerchief to regain my usual calm. I blew my nose loudly.

THEY were still chuckling offensively when "Forget-me-not" came into action, taking the hewer of coal squarely in the pit of his somewhat expansive stomach. After a series of convulsive contortions upon the canvas, Mr. Barrington's protegé concluded his entertainment by hanging himself by the feet from the top rope of the ring.

I may say that I never collected checks with greater pleasure in my life.

After two or three such pleasant outings I made a discovery—and one that gave me furiously to think. Invariably at these séances Mr. Barrington would appear. No laying the odds against my lanky gladiator now—oh, dear me no! Every bet that I took he followed eagerly. He was paying himself back!

At Foley's first Metropolitan appearance—against a really good man—once more I saw the ubiquitous Barrington, and with him the stertorous Wheezy Joe. They'd come to help themselves with both hands and the family satchel.

Having had prescience of some such advent, I was ready for them. All the money I wanted to bet I placed prior to the day of the contest. If Messrs. Barrington and Friend were going to follow in *my* wake, they were in for an extremely bare time.

Mr. Foley obliged—by special arrangement—with his usual masterly impersonation of a mistaken vocation, upon which I glowered with an expression as artistic as it was mendaciously misleading. Midway through the third round I morbidly put a small sum upon the other man, sighing strickenly and audibly in Mr. Barrington's direction as I did so. I uttered no comment, but lapsed into preternatural gloom.

A moment later I had the extreme satisfaction of noting Wheezy Joe following in my footsteps, but his bet was for a big sum, and a very hot price he paid for it, too! The astute layers of the odds had not quite made up their minds about Foley as yet. He looked too bad to be *quite* true, I suppose. At that moment I caught the erring Mr. Foley's eyes; from then on we were two minds with but a single thought.

GONG! Mr. Foley pounded to the center; his opponent met him, feinted, and essayed a stiff hook. Then "Forget-me-not" flashed out like the kick of a horse, took him clean on the point of the jaw, and *his* little bothers were over for the evening. The expressions on the faces of Barrington and Friend were as balm in Gilead to me.

"Well," said I, rising to my feet with a great sigh of relief, "and that's *that*. I think I shall make something of him yet."

There was no response; they preceded me toward the door, muttering unpleasantly.

As we drew near the portal of the managerial offices, a curious thing happened.

Stalking before the two disgruntled souls was a person who seemed to have found no pleasure in the finale of the evening's entertainment—none whatever. Not that he showed any singularity in *that*, but his voice topped all others in his complete and vituperous denunciation of the victorious Mr. Foley. Moreover, which *was* singular, he appeared to know him intimately. Some one in the depressed queue ventured some mildly deprecating reply to his opinions.

"You can't tell me anything about this bloke Foley!" this most captious of critics blared back stridently. "I knew him before any one in this bloomin' country did—up on the Riverina. And his family. My oath I do—much good it done me!" He emitted so hollow and heartfelt a groan upon imparting this information that I glanced toward him with considerable interest. His face I could not see; but I noted that, although not tall, he had great breadth, and was indubitably a powerful chap.

"Him fight?" he went on bitingly. "*Him!* I wish somebody'd put up the dough for *me* to meet him. I'd show——"

At that moment the manager appeared, beckoned to me, and I was perforce obliged to attend him in his lair. When I emerged later, richer in pocket—if not in mind—the disgruntled gentleman had vanished with the rest of the crowd; as also had those twin souls, Barrington and his wheezy confederate. Glancing keenly about among the little knots still discussing the evening's sport on the sidewalk, I was suddenly galvanized by the appearance of those gentry from a house of refreshment opposite. With them, expatiating with great eagerness and much richness of gesture, was the carping critic I was seeking!

Who the deuce *was* the fellow? What had he to do with those two prize sharks? Heaven only knew. Somehow, it was a discomfiting business.

BY the thick of the winter season the limelight was beginning to fall gently upon Mr. Foley. Prospects looked particularly rosy, though with every victim that fell it became increasingly difficult to match him. So, for the moment we progressed at a mark-time gait.

Mr. Barrington had not put in an appearance at any of Foley's subsequent *soirées*, and I assumed that they had marked, learned, and inwardly digested the little rap over the knuckles that I had administered unto them.

I was just pondering the eventualities that might arise from a trip to Paris where heavy-weights were in violent demand, when lo!—as manna from the heavens came the totally unexpected.

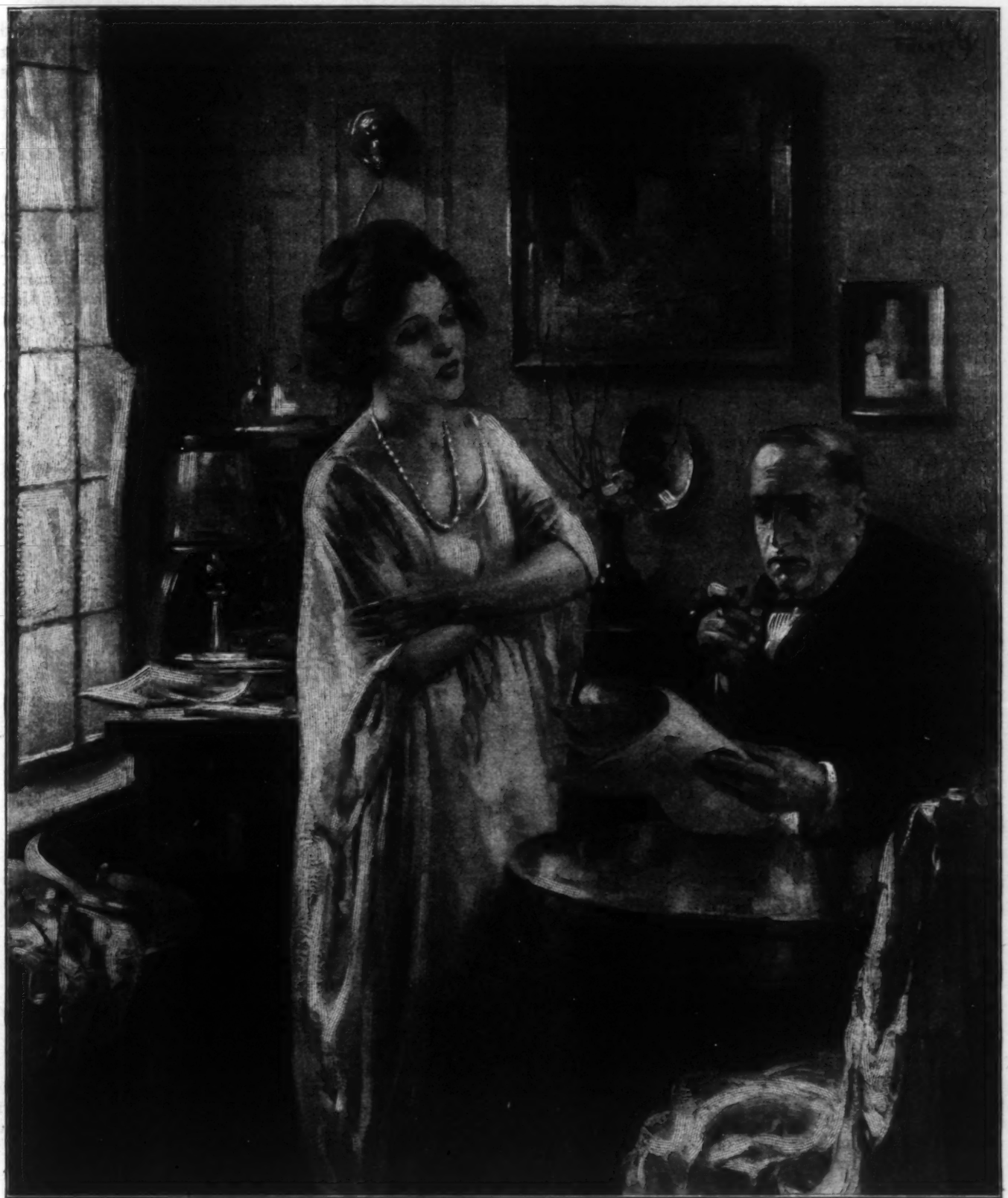
A challenge—supported by a check for five hundred pounds—was hurled from the columns of the leading sporting Daily for a match with Foley, under championship conditions, for the best purse offered—winner to take all! Said side stake of five hundred to be increased to one thousand, if Foley's connections were willing; and the whole was issued on behalf of a man whom I—or any one else so far as I could discover—had never seen or heard of. A gentleman rejoicing in the suggestive cognomen of "Stiffener" Brady.

If Foley's connections were willing! If——

Mercury would have had to grease his winged heels to have kept pace with me to that newspaper office. To my profound astonishment I found the challenge absolutely *bona fide*, and I had the delirious pleasure of meeting the gentleman representing the party of the first part upon the other side—the "Stiffener" person. Mr. Brady himself was *not* on view.

His representative I found to be a straightforward, gentlemanly fellow, without an ounce of bounce or bluff in his composition. Though absolutely uncommunicative about his man, I found him the soul of frankness and honorable dealing.

Without more ado, I appended my signature to the



Staring at me from the newspaper Pearla had given me, was one of my finest publicity stunts: Foley, in ring kit, leaning gracefully upon the shoulder of his Discoverer and Manager—yours humbly!

articles on behalf of Foley, and also to a check for one thousand of the very best ever minted, to cover their contribution toward the side bet. It was agreed that should either party back out of the contest, their one thousand pounds became forfeit. The winner of the contest, either by referee's verdict, knock-out, non-appearance, or any other variety of forfeit, to take the lot.

Back I went to start Mr. Foley upon such preparation as he had not before experienced. All reports that floated into my widely opened ears were to the effect that the "Stiffener" was engaged in the same arduous task. At length a promoter offered a purse eminently acceptable to both parties; and, in accordance with the original agreement, the winner was to take all.

Then the papers began their merry boomstering lay; though, curiously enough, the more I pushed my flame-headed hero into the light of day, the deeper his opponent withdrew into the Cimmerian gloom that surrounded him. There was seemingly plenty of money about for him—one or two of the biggest commission agents always being ready to accept whatever I wanted

to invest. But all I could discover was that they were betting on behalf of a wealthy syndicate—equally retiring as to its identity.

However, although I had not myself set eyes upon the mysterious Brady, I knew something about him. Agents of mine—unscrupulous persons upon whose reports I could absolutely depend—had penetrated the sequestered cloister wherein he trained. When they returned, reporting him as a land flowing with milk and honey for *us*, I went forth and bet my good money with vim and éclat. The *précis* of the considered opinion of my Intelligence Department was that whoever had backed Brady to beat "Forget-me-not" must have been born blind. That he had nothing whatever to him except an extremely ferocious aspect, a bad temper, and a murderous right swing, which, if it landed on one of Foley's elbows, would pay first past the post without further ado. In fact, about the only thing they had no pleasant gleanings upon, was the one thing I was most anxious to discover: who it was that was *behind* this well-backed incompetent. Upon this important point my mines of information refused to explode.

CAME then, as blunt old Carlyle would have put it, first hint of gaunt disaster, a sudden and envenomed dart that filled me with diremisgivings,alarms, and strange forebodings. It launched itself upon me from the Agony Column of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Seated in the train upon my way up to town one morning, my eye fell upon the following:

Foley, Patrick Francis, late 1st. Batt: A.N.Z.A.C., known to be in England, not returning with his regiment. Should this meet his eye is earnestly entreated to communicate with Pearla. *Deserted* and *forsaken* by *he knows whom* she has followed. He will understand. *Money exhausted; here destitute.* Remember the past! PEARLA. Box 37926.

I don't know just how long I sat and gazed in stupefaction at this woe-laden exhortation, but it seemed years and years to my numbed faculties. There was no doubt as to the Foley—Patrick Francis. I had that name on a contract for three years, with options. There was no doubt as to the late A.N.Z.A.C. There was still less as to his being in England; and worse—far, far worse than all—there was no possible shadow of doubt as to Pearla! Upon the massive forearm of my charge, tattooed in multicolored inks, was an armlet; in the center of that adornment a blurred, fleshy-looking delineation of two human hearts trussed with what appeared to be a large tufted harpoon, and, underneath, blazoning in letters of rich vermilion, the one explanatory word—Pearla!

Now what the deuce had Foley been up to upon his native heath? What perfidiousness had brought Pearla meandering across these thousands of seasick miles to exude an insidious, if velvet-gloved threat, and a brief, but harrowing, financial statement all in one prepaid inch of Agony? Who was she? And in what particular direction had Foley proved unworthy?

I *knew* Foley. I knew that, like many another of his kidney, he would face an amalgamation of underfed lions and tigers in stand-up combat with the utmost intrepidity; but let one whisper of the proximity of this female get to his ears--then, hip, hooray, and ho for the jungle for Foley! And yours humbly would be left alone to weep and wail and gnash the few remaining molars left to me! Well, not if I was cognizant of the fact!

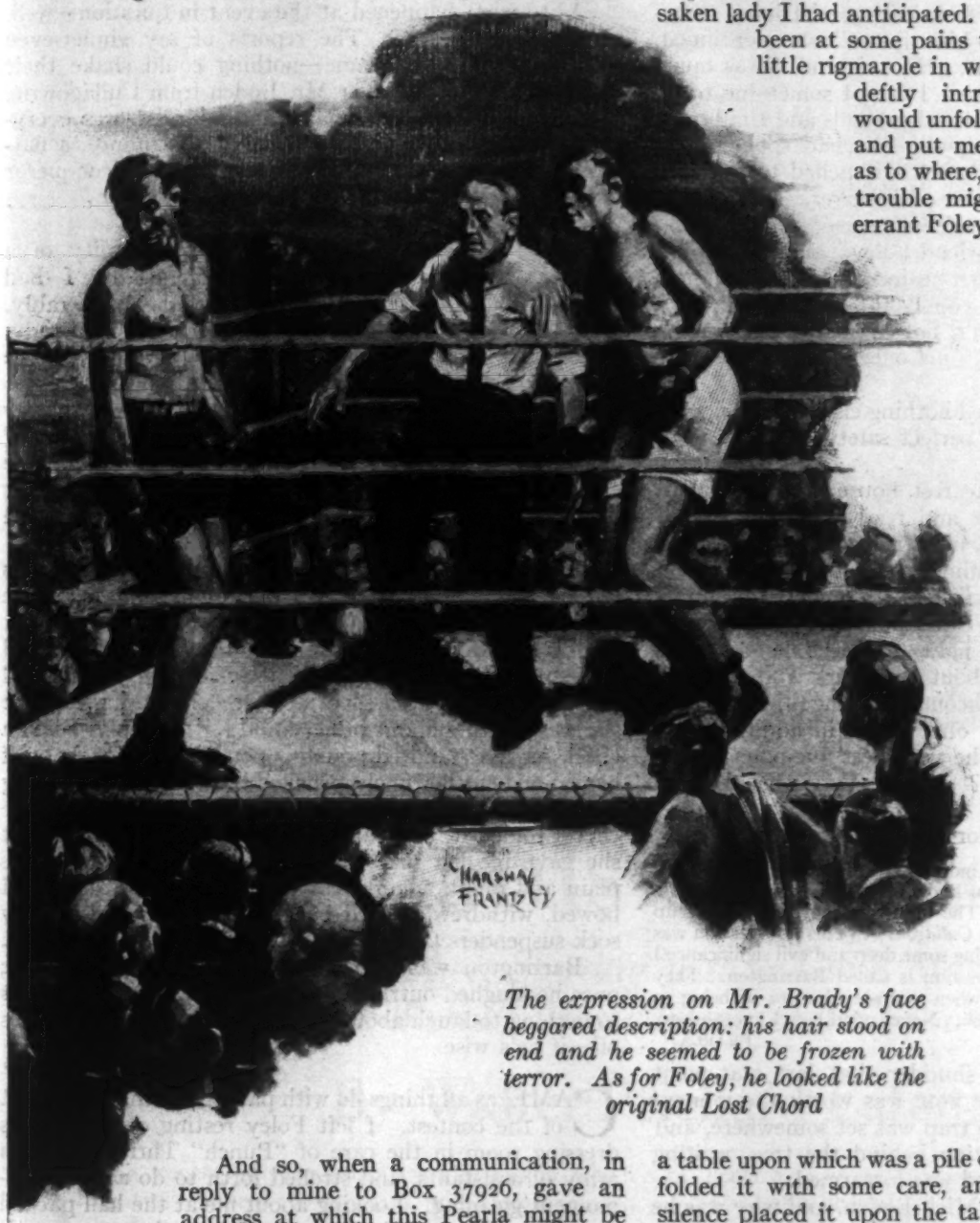
I had sorrow for Pearla. I lamented freely that such things could be. I could find it in my heart to heap scorn upon Foley. Indeed, several very neat and pungent pieces of upbraiding that I might deliver to the philanderer *after the contest* floated through my disheveled mind. But, emphatically, I could permit nothing to happen that would in any way disturb him in his training. There is sweet reason in all things, but I saw none whatever in my being segregated from a large and cherished portion of my competency through either the perfidy of this red-headed Lothario, or the anguish of his tenacious Pearla. Far from it. If Pearla got within a hundred miles of her erring Foley, then call me a Dutchman!

The voice of a woman came out of the crowd, shrill and menacing. It was Pearla!

As quickly as might be I returned home, thinking over the thorny problem. Tampering with the scales, I weighed the Gladiator, found him seventeen pounds over what he should have been—and was—in avoirdupois, rushed him into a vibrating machine I own called a Ford, and dashed forth in full honk into the highways and byways. At a village, some seventy miles away, we halted and cast anchor. There, among sylvan glades and bosky dells, I arranged to conclude Mr. Foley's preparation. It was six rutty miles from a railway; the nearest post office was four miles and some furlongs away, telegraph station eight, and the telephone was still being discussed there as one of the marvels of modern scientific achievement—heard of, but as yet unseen. A brisk morning's work, but I felt no pleasure in it. My heart

was sore within me as I pondered on the situation.

After violently churning up what little gray matter beneficent Nature had thought sufficient for me in the hand-out, I resolved upon a desperate course. I would beard Pearla in her lair. With deep guilt I would confer with her. Machiavelli would be as the most rustic ham-bone compared with me for the diplomatic touch, the soft tongue that uttered words to disguise thoughts.



The expression on Mr. Brady's face beggared description: his hair stood on end and he seemed to be frozen with terror. As for Foley, he looked like the original Lost Chord

And so, when a communication, in reply to mine to Box 37926, gave an address at which this Pearla might be interviewed, I cranked up the Ford and sallied forth, accounting for my trip with manifold lies.

I INTERVIEWED Pearla. She granted me audience in a private apartment, an ornate boudoir in which the fumes of yesteryear's cigarette smoke blended with the odor of consumed intoxicants in complete harmony. And Pearla indubitably blended with *them*—in any other surroundings she would have been entirely out of the picture.

She was a handsome woman, of fine physique and an opulence of curve such as one sees at times delineated in fresco embellishment of restaurants which do not close promptly at midnight's chime. Of her slightly dishevelled mane of hair, it might be said that she either knew of some chemical substance which, applied discriminately, rendered it the color of a fire at sea, or it was a legacy direct from the Evil One. In her eyes—two of the most compelling orbs I have ever faced in cold-blooded deception—there was a curious sardonic quality, and also a gleam that, unless I were much mistaken, could spell Trouble—with a capital T—to any person or persons incurring their flame-headed owner's displeasure.

She spoke to me softly, and I began—not without trepidation. She was so entirely different from the forsaken lady I had anticipated. However, I began. I had been at some pains to construct a really natty little rigmarole in which, in reply to insidious, deftly introduced questionings, she would unfold to me her life's sad story, and put me upon the inside hall mat as to where, and from which angle, the trouble might be anticipated for the errant Foley. Also, the nature of said trouble.

It was a nice little story, and was scheduled to conclude with a little cash contribution, purporting to come from our mutual friend Foley, who was unfortunately upon the Continent at the moment. I won't bore you with the details of it, but you may take it from me that my contribution to the conference was the real and genuine goods. Verisimilitude breathed in every word of it. It was indeed a well-oiled composition.

Pearla fixed her slanting eyes upon me, and said nothing. To be meticulous, she emitted but one "Oh" and two "Ah's" throughout the whole of the peroration—the second "Ah" leaving her full red lips only upon receipt of the temporary cash relief. This she laid hands upon instanter.

Then, without further word, she turned to a table upon which was a pile of newspapers, selected one, folded it with some care, and in the same disturbing silence placed it upon the table before me. Staring at me was one of my finest publicity stunts: Foley in ring kit, smiling inanely at the world in general and leaning gracefully upon the shoulder of his Discoverer, Backer, Manager, and Life-long Friend—yours humbly!

After a silent, but soul-searching communion with myself, I looked up from this hell-conceived, but otherwise pleasing, representation of Patrick Francis and self to find her eying me with contemptuous amusement; which, to say the least, was infernally disconcerting.

"I wonder that you haven't been choked long since," she observed acidly.

Strangely enough, I was thinking much the same about her, but I kept it to myself. Hastily I began some maundering, paltering explanation.

"Cut it!" she snapped tersely; then, turning her back upon me, sat down at a table and began to scribble furiously with a lead pencil. I watched her, fascinated.

Suddenly she shoved the composition into an envelope, licked the gummed flap with native elegance, slammed her fist down on it, and advanced upon me.

"You give that to Paddy!" she ordered. "Tell him I'm glad of his cash just at present, and I'll pay it back just as I'll pay a lot of other things." Her eyes narrowed malevolently upon me. "He knows me," she said, with a sinister intonation "and he knows I don't forget." She flung the envelope in front of me. "There's something there that'll make him jump," she continued, "something about this fight. He can send me as much more money as he can spare. I've got something to do and I'm going to do it; but it takes funds and I'm broke. I'll square with him one day." She had spoken with such alarming violence that I felt impelled to put in a softening word for the absent philanderer.

"I feel sure that our friend Foley——" I began.

"You take that to our friend Foley," she interrupted shortly, "and mind your own business. I've had enough of you for one afternoon, you bald-headed old liar! I may *look* a fool"—she didn't, not by many and many a weary lineal mile—"but I'm *not* one. Ask Foley. *Hop* it, now!"

I hopped it; there seemed nothing else to be done just at the moment—not with perfect safety.

IN the sanctity of the nearest house of refreshment, I drew forth her letter and read it avidly. As I had not the faintest intention of giving it to that unworthy man—of mentioning or permitting to be mentioned in his hearing the name of its sender—the information contained therein was unquestionably mine. Moreover, it concerned the fight—and who had a greater right to be enlightened about any dark and abstruse points concerning that forthcoming carnage than myself? No one—emphatically, no one. And, in addition, had I not coughed up four of the very best five-pound notes toward her general upkeep? I had. Very well, then. I read it without qualms.

It was an eye-opener, for it ran:

> Thanks for money. Send more. You don't need me to tell you the strength of things—you know me. Here's something you *don't* know, in fair exchange. The unknown they are putting up to fight you is *Mick Boden from Cullagowrie*. (This information was heavily underscored, as betokening some deep and evil significance.) The man finding the money for him is called Barrington. They count upon your backing out when you see him—or of being so paralyzed that he'll get you quick. Never mind how I know—I do. *I'm not finished yet!* PEARLA.

Well, apart from the shudder that last statement sent right through me, the note was worth the money! A nice, sharp-toothed little trap was set somewhere, and Alf Barrington was squatting behind the tree, waiting for it to go off. Forewarned was forearmed.

But who the devil was Mick Boden, and why was he supposed to have the Injun sign on Foley? And what the devil had Pearla to do with the hotchpotch?

After an exciting hour of telephoning around my Secret Intelligence Department I got home as quickly as I could, haunted on the journey by horrible misgivings. Many times during the evening I was upon the point of unbosoming to Foley, and getting the tip straight from the horse's mouth, as it were; but upon each occasion I crushed the impulse down. I knew that if Foley bolted in fright, not all the king's horses and all the king's men could get him back again.

From thence onward nothing whatever occurred to remind me that Pearla was in the offing. But one thing I took particularly good care to do. Upon the Monday of each and every week that followed, I dispatched to her a replica of my original cash contribution. It was not so much that I wished to propitiate her—not at all. Still, Pearla with all her wrongs gnawing at her vitals was bad enough when plenteously provided for; but Pearla, hard up and filled to overflowing with the red-hot lava of revenge, was too much for my fortitude to contemplate, particularly upon the eve of such a contest as we had in hand. And, anyhow, I fully intended that Foley should foot the bill at the finish. It was merely hypothecation of finance until a more propitious moment.

As to what happened at the event in question—well, that was up to me. The reports of my gimlet-eyed ferrets remained the same—nothing could shake their opinions. Mr. Brady—or Mr. Boden from Cullagowrie, to give him his inherited name and address—was everything conceivable in the way of a dub, a quince, a flat-footed ham-bone—anything you like except a conqueror of Foley.

I MAY add that through the instrumentality of a preternaturally shrewd commission agent, I had touched up Mr. Barrington's betting book considerably. If Brady *didn't* win, "B" stood for Barrington, Brady, Bankruptcy—*and* Boden as well. Of course, if he *did*—— Well, I refused to dwell upon that.

On the eve of the fight I brought Foley to town, saw him safely to bed, left him in the care of "Punch" Thrippy and an assortment of other hirelings—and made a suddenly determined upon call on Pearla. I found her at home; and I may say at once that she received me without enthusiasm.

Knowing by bitter experience the uncanny acuteness of her perceptions, and also her blunt and primitive methods of attack, I cut out the Machiavelli stuff, cast the diplomatic touch to the four winds of heaven, and came out with a plunk and plain say-so, which demanded an equally plunk and plain answer—or nothing. While she was hunting about in her mind for her reply, I laid a check for five hundred pounds upon the table in front of her. She bent her finely penciled brows upon me in long and thoughtful contemplation, then, picking up the check, folded it, and calmly tucked it away. After that she gave me her answer, and with it an assurance, as plain and plunk as any reasonable man could desire. I bowed, withdrew, rushed back to the club, and bet my sock suspenders that Foley would bring home the bacon.

Barrington was there, smiling upon me derisively; once he laughed outright. Well, he laughs best who has something to laugh about. He also laughs after it comes off—if he's wise.

CAME, as all things do with patient waiting, the night of the contest. I left Foley resting quietly in his dressing room in the care of "Punch" Thrippy and an army of assistants, and strolled forth to do a little last-moment gleaning. Looking about me at the hall packed to suffocation and feeling proud indeed, my eye fell suddenly upon Barrington and Wheezy Joe seated together in a neutral corner. I went over and discovered that my seat was adjacent to them. Inwardly grinning, I spoke to them.

"Well," I said affably, "come to see Foley do the trick again to-night?"

"No," grunted Barrington, "and he won't. Want to bet on it?"

For a moment I considered them with a pitying smile that I knew galled them considerably.

"I will lay you," I began, with meticulous preciseness, "being old friends, I will lay you five hundred to two that he *does*."

"Done!" uttered both as one voice, and booked the bet. I did likewise.

Really, it was *too* good! [*Continued on page 120.*]

Not a club, palace or hotel interior, but the lobby of a beautiful new Keith theatre in New York City

The Wizards of Vaudeville

How Keith and Albee, Starting with a Dime Museum, Became Owners of the World's Most Magnificent Chain of Theatres

By Walter Prichard Eaton

AT the center of the country-wide system which controls some 1500 theatres and almost 20,000 performers—the system we call vaudeville—sits a down-East Yankee who was born in Machias, Maine, more than sixty years ago, and who with another Yankee, B. F. Keith—now dead—converted American variety entertainment from hole-in-the-corner humbleness, even indecency, to respectability and an affluence unknown to the so-called legitimate drama. This man is Edward F. Albee, who is the genius, the father confessor, and also the arbiter of American vaudeville. He is still supreme in spite of the recent efforts of other managers to start a rival chain of theatres, in which vaudeville is the sole entertainment.

The work he and his partner, Keith, did in the '80's, and the expansion of that work since, forms an interesting chapter in theatrical history, and in business history. Mr. Albee's attitude toward his theatres and his public, the return to him of good will and profit from his liberal-handed policies toward the public, the luxurious houses he has built on the profits of cheap, clean entertainment, make a heartening story. Mr. Albee has been shrewd, but he has been decent, kind-hearted and full of a real pride in vaudeville. And he has built an enduring monument as a result.

In the early 1880's, variety entertainment in

THIS story of two young men who, thirty years ago, dreamed of making the despised "varieties" respectable, who invented "refined" vaudeville in a Boston dime museum and struggled up to a realization of their vision in a chain of palatial theatres, is an extraordinary romance of big business seasoned with the glamour of the theatrical world.

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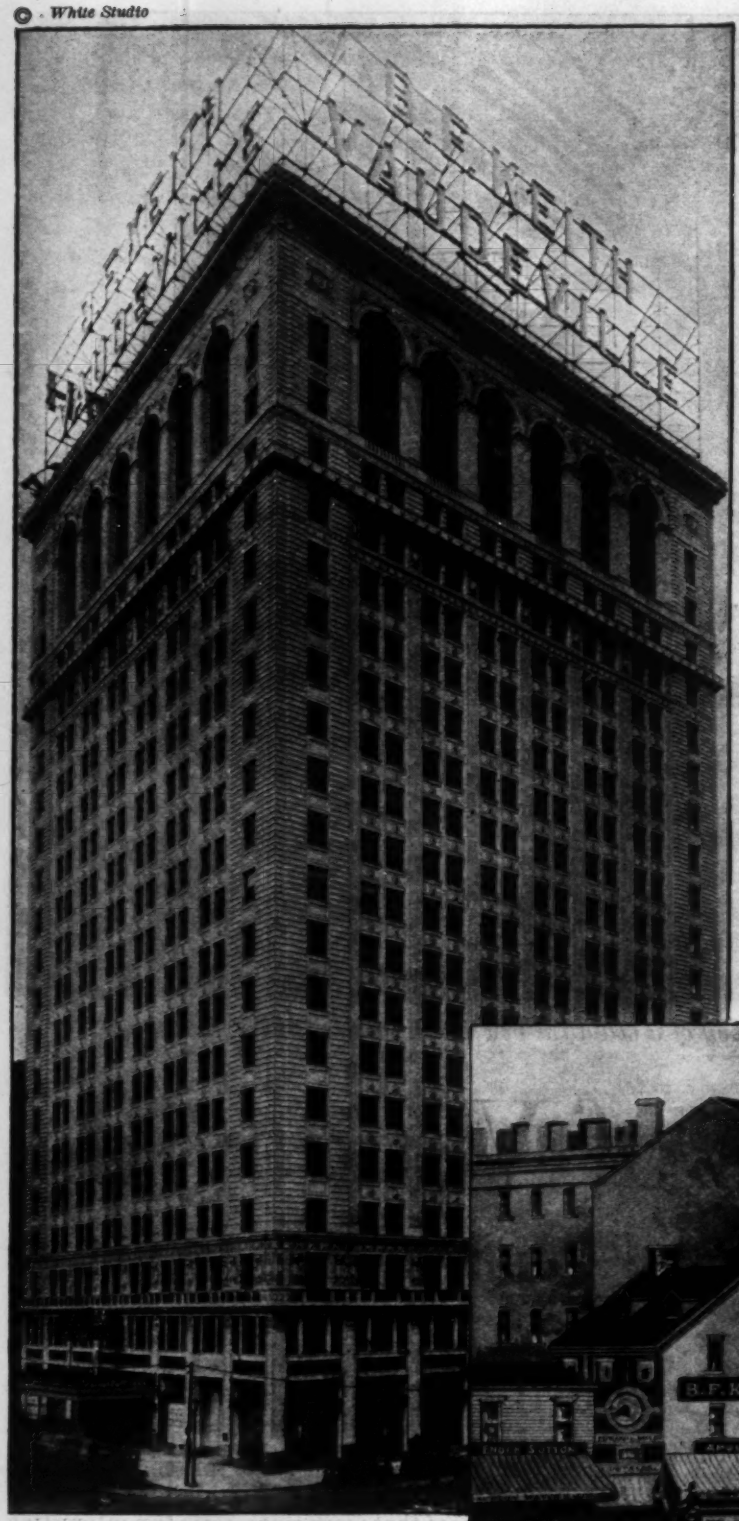


Keith's original museum in Boston (at right) and (above) one of its magnificent offspring—the new theatre in Cleveland

America was a pariah of the arts. Respectable women were seldom seen in the audience, and we fear seldom on the stage. Even in the East, the performer's life was a precarious one: he worked where he could, dressed in dirty holes, and the farther West he went the worse conditions became. The Western honky-tonks were combination dance halls, saloons and variety theatres, frequented by drunken cowboys, miners and loose women. A respectable actor would no more have considered going into the varieties than he would have considered becoming a burglar.

Such was the condition even in Boston when, in 1883, Benjamin Franklin Keith, a farmer's son from Hillsboro, Massachusetts, who had drifted into the circus business, arrived in Boston with a few dollars in his pocket, and decided to become a showman on his own hook. He rented a vacant store, Number 505 Washington Street, for which he paid a dollar a day, got a pail and a mop and scrubbed it clean with his own hands, and then opened it as a "museum," with Baby Alice, weight 1½ pounds, and a Barnum mermaid as attractions. He prospered in a small way, took a man named Batcheller in as silent partner, added a second room with a stage, on which performances could be given, and christened the house "Keith and Batcheller's Museum." Among the early attractions were a chicken with a human face, the Circassian beauties, "the biggest hog in America," and a pair of youthful comedians named Weber and Fields, who got $40 the first week, but consented to work for $35 the second.

E. F. Albee Becomes Keith's Partner

IN 1884, Keith christened his performances "vaudeville," to get away from the stigma attached to "variety show," and made every effort to keep his little museum clean and decent. In 1885, he originated the idea of a continuous performance, from ten to ten, in order to get in more people. More came—the place held 300—but they refused to get out after the first performance of the bill, so that he had to invent the "chaser" act. On this first occasion, he used a Punch and and Judy show, repeated over and over, to clear the rooms. But the novelty of even the continuous performance gradually wore off, and late in the autumn of 1885 business was pretty bad, and Keith in the dumps.

Just then a young man of twenty-eight, whom he had known in his circus days, blew in. This was E. F. Albee. Born in Maine, Albee got acquainted with a circus troupe, adventured as a boy will in their company, and remained with them for ten years. What seemed to be troubling Keith most was that in spite of all his efforts, the "right people" in Boston wouldn't come to his museum. They persisted in regarding it as a "low place." What could he do to raise its tone, and get more and better people to come inside?

"Give me over night to think about it," said young Albee, and went back to his hotel to consider ways and means.

The idea he evolved over night was to present light opera at variety prices—then only ten cents. This was at the time when the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas were in the first flush of their triumph—and there was no copyright protection. Already dozens of companies had sung "Pinafore." "The Mikado" was even then being sung at the Hollis Street, Boston, with young Richard Mansfield as *Ko-ko*. None of these operettas, however, had ever been sung in a variety house, at popular prices. Indeed, nothing of such "class" had ever been tried in variety. Mr. Albee at once set about recruiting a company of choir and other singers who happened to be out of jobs, sent them to the Hollis Street to copy the style and business of "The Mikado," and then sprung a Gilbert and Sullivan opera on the town, at ten cents a seat!

E. F. Albee, self-made emperor of vaudeville as it is today

There were five performances a day, with vaudeville acts between, and so great was the success of the venture that the "respectable" element of the Boston population began to pay attention. Middle-class men brought their families. Women shoppers dropped in. And the producers made money. They went to Providence, fixed up a little auditorium there, and tried the same program on the Rhode Island capital. Presently they were affluent enough to rent the pretty little Bijou Theatre in Boston, an "upstairs" house on Washington Street, close to the great Boston Theatre, and for the first time in the history of variety in America, and much to the amazement even of Mr. Batcheller, the silent partner, gave vaudeville amid the surroundings of the legitimate drama before large audiences.

Weber and Fields, "in their latest laughable specialty, the Two Skull Crackers," were one of the attractions. Milton Aborn and the operetta company also sang a considerable repertoire. They secured, as an added attraction to their stage performances, a midget who was exhibited on the street floor, and they sent out engraved invitations all over the Back Bay, for a reception in her honor. Even the Back Bay being human, several blue stockings came. The Bijou waxed in respectability, and Mr. Keith and Mr. Albee, now his right-hand man, waxed in revenue. Mr. Keith bought three fine horses, which were then the Yankee's outward sign of ease and affluence.

But they saw even then that it was not enough to

The famous old Union Square Theatre, where in 1893 Keith and Albee first converted New Yorkers to their vision of "refined" vaudeville with performers like David Warfield and the Sidney Drews

have one or two variety theatres respectable and giving entertainments which could appeal to a class of people such as they wished to reach. If there were only one or two such theatres, there would not be work enough to attract the right class of artists into the vaudeville field; that is, there would not be long enough periods of employment. It was necessary to have several such theatres, and highly desirable, indeed, so to elevate the whole variety stage that it would attract, as a profession, more men and women of some refinement and genuine talent. In other words, what Keith and Albee set out to do in the early '90's, only seven years after Keith had opened his museum in a vacant store on Washington Street, was to revolutionize an entire branch of the amusement industry of America.

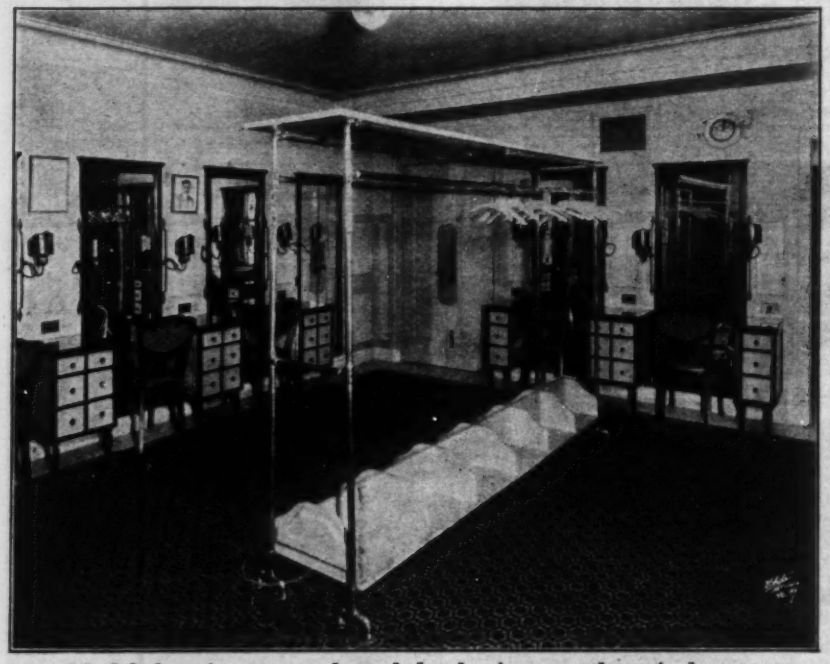
The new Keith Theatres in Fordham, Brooklyn, Cleveland and elsewhere even have nurseries for stage youngsters

The New Keith Theatres

THEIR campaign was twofold. It was, first, to get more theatres under their own control, especially one in New York City, at the heart of things, and to build in Boston—a city for which Mr. Keith had a peculiar and natural affection—such a playhouse as would advertise their ideal all over the country. Mr. Keith bought the land for his Boston house in 1891, and plans were begun for a structure to cost $100,000. Meanwhile, Mr. Albee, the organizer and the member of the firm who saw, perhaps, with the larger vision, opened a newly acquired house in Philadelphia, and, in 1893, took over the old Union Square Theatre in New York, redecorated it and opened that house with vaudeville in the fall of 1893. The Union Square had been the home of a famous stock company, and its conversion to the new form of entertainment was something of a shock to old-time New Yorkers, who did not know quite what to expect, and feared the worst. Their surprise at the clean, decent entertainment was great, and the house was a success from the start.

After this opening, Mr. Albee rushed back to Boston, where the new Keith Theatre was under construction. Already, the original $100,000 had been spent, and he laid plans to spend yet more. Keith, it is said, was a bit reluctant, but Albee was seeing visions and when the house was finally completed, in 1894, it had cost $600,000. I leave it to those more expert with figures than I am, to reckon what that would represent today. From my own experiences in building, I should guess about $2,000,000.

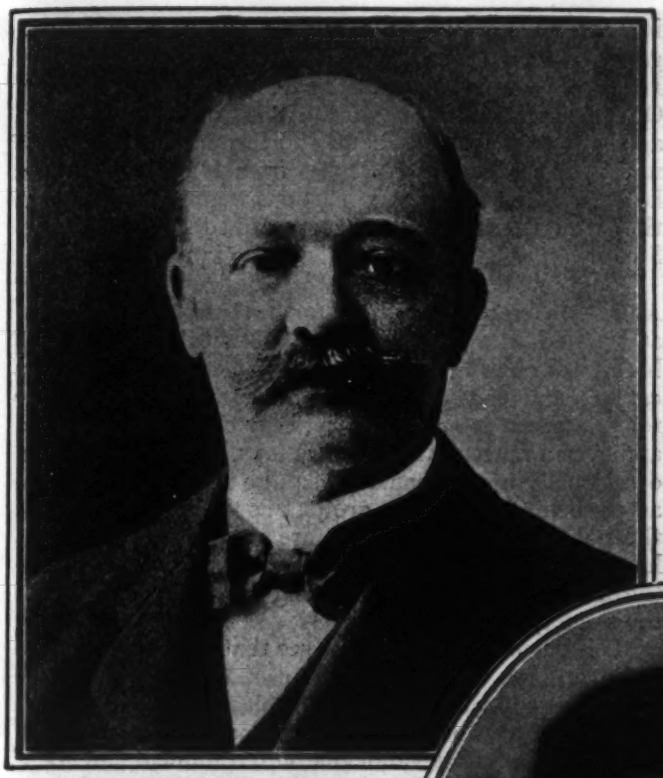
At any rate, neither Boston, nor America, had ever seen anything like it. These two Yankees, without any artistic training and without any guarantee that they would ever get their money back, had built for the presentation of the lowly, despised variety entertainment, a house of ivory and gold, of domed and decorated ceilings, of richly carpeted lobbies and retiring rooms, of walls hung with paintings and heavy with stucco reliefs, and a house, too, which was clean and comfortable behind the scenes, so that the astonished actors and actresses could find there such conditions of decency and ease as existed in no other American theatre, either variety or legitimate.



Model dressing rooms have helped win even theatrical stars to the vaudeville circuit

Boston is a large city, but it is also a parochial one—an overgrown village in some respects. In the '90's, it had two revered institutions—the Symphony orchestra and Mrs. Jack Gardner. About the first thing Keith and Albee did was to engage a band of the Symphony players to perform in the new theatre during the summer, and Mrs. Jack at once took a box every week and came to hear them. What Mrs. Jack did was the signal. Keith's became not only respectable, but quite the thing. In 1923, the glory of that interior is somewhat dimmed. But it is still comfortable, cheerful and marvelously clean.

In the 1890's, however, middle-class and suburban Boston regarded it as the last word in magnificence, as well as morally and socially respectable. They flocked to it by the thousands. Women could go alone of an afternoon. For fifty cents, even for twenty-five cents, they could fix their hair in silk-upholstered retiring rooms before gilded mirrors, look at impressive paintings



Above, the late B. F. Keith, founder of present-day vaudeville; at right, Fred Stone, selected by Albee as his probable successor

in the lobbies, hear a program on the stage which they could laugh at and enjoy without fear of shame, and perhaps see Mrs. Jack in a box. What more could mortal ask? The fame of Keith's theatre spread abroad in the land. The chance to play in such a house, to such audiences, and to get additional work for many weeks in other cities, attracted artists who, ten years before that would no more have considered going into the varieties than they would have considered sweeping streets.

For instance, in 1894 David Warfield appeared at the Union Square, which was not, perhaps, extraordinary, Warfield being then known only to musical comedy. But in 1896, John Mason and his wife, Marion Manola, appeared in a one-act sketch, and the same year Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Drew began their long vaudeville career. The name of Drew was one to conjure with on the American stage. The Drews were of the blood royal. Soon after, Ezra Kendall came over from the "legitimate," and Eben Plympton and Agnes Proctor, players of irreproachable dignity, acted Bronson Howard's "Old Love Letters."

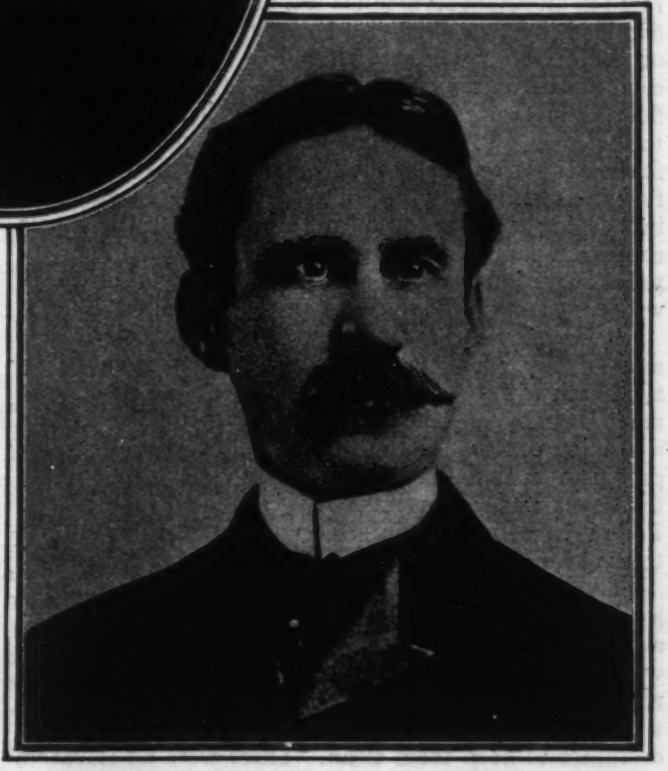
Famous Actors Appear on Keith Circuit

IN 1897, the great Maurice Barrymore himself appeared on the Keith circuit in "A Man of the World," a sketch written for him by Augustus Thomas. He was preceded on the bill by the Russell Brothers, then at the height of their popularity. The same year Clara Morris, famous emotional actress, also yielded to the lure of vaudeville. Keith and Albee paid high for these people, of course, but each new recruit gave them added prestige, and raised the standard of vaudeville one notch higher. By the beginning of the 20th century, vaudeville in the Eastern States had become solidly respectable, the Keith circuit had extended over considerable territory and even the West was beginning to wake up. The pariah of the theatrical arts had become a citizen of standing.

Mr. Keith died in 1914, and his son Paul in 1918. Since then Mr. Albee has been the sole head of the constantly expanding Keith enterprises. He controls the destinies of all the Keith theatres—some 300 in all; and he is the dominant force in almost a thousand other vaudeville houses. A gray-haired, shrewd-faced, kindly Yankee, he sits in his office above the Palace Theatre on Broadway and guides the vast organization he has erected. It is his life, his form of artistic self-expression. He has built himself into it. He long achieved all the money a man could need, and has put his earnings back into ever finer and more commodious theatres and into welfare work for the vaudeville actors and even the public—only to have it come back to him increased. But this needs some explanation.

The majority of the theatres in the Keith circuit were built or remodeled by Keith or Albee. Starting with the famous Boston house, it has been the Keith policy to erect handsome new theatres when it was possible, or at the least to remodel old ones which fell directly into their hands. In the task of theatre building Mr. Albee was always the leading spirit. He likes to build them. He picks out all the material, all the colors, all the hangings

Below, an early photograph of E. F. Albee



and furniture and pictures and decorations himself. He fusses over them like a bride over a new bungalow. And, as his resources have increased, he has put more and more money into these new houses, on both sides of the footlights, planning both for the enjoyment of his patrons and the comfort of his artists.

He has, to date, built almost twenty houses, in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Dayton, Columbus, Cincinnati, Providence, Syracuse, Brooklyn, Cleveland, and elsewhere. And they are unlike any other theatres in the country, because of their comfort, their cleanliness and their orderliness.

Unusual Features of Keith Theatres

MOREOVER, several of them are actually devoted at times to purely civic purposes. The Cincinnati house is the home of a monthly forum. The Syracuse symphony orchestra has the use of the Syracuse house twice a month. The Albee Theatre in Providence is regularly opened in the morning, at stated intervals, for local amateurs to try out their talents. In Harlem, New York City, Mr. Albee maintains club-rooms for a Boys' Band, and in Syracuse—as at the Coliseum on upper Broadway, Manhattan—a school of dancing where visiting performers give instruction to any who show promise.

Still, it will always be the sheer cleanliness, order and decency of their houses, their dignified self-respect, which will impress you most.

I went into the Palace Theatre on Broadway the other day, not ten minutes after the intermission. The stairs leading down to the smoking room had already been freshly cleaned, the floor of the smoking room swept clean, and the tobacco odors blown out. The Palace Theatre, however, is not one of the later houses, and it is on Broadway, with a vast floating population to keep it full. A more extraordinary theatre is the new Keith house at Fordham, in the Bronx.

This is strictly a neighborhood house; that is, it draws only on the residents of that immediate region. The same people come week after week. It gives a program of mixed vaudeville and pictures at a low price. Yet you step into a roomy lobby behind the seats, decorated in an Adam style much less ornate and much more dignified than the old Keith house in Boston, with stairs of real marble rising at each end to the balconies. On each of the balcony floors, as well as on the orchestra floor, are retiring rooms, with matrons in attendance for the women, and the second-balcony rooms are just as fine as those on the ground. The women's rooms are furnished with richly framed mirrors and rare mezzotints in keeping with the beautiful furnishings; the men's rooms are paneled in English walnut. On the tables are vases of fresh flowers. There is not a speck of dirt anywhere, nor any noise during a performance.

Behind the scenes, it is equally clean, equally quiet, and equally comfortable. Each dressing room has a tiled bath with tub and shower. There is an elevator to reach them by, and the corridors are carpeted. This is all a striking contrast to the unspeakable conditions which prevailed behind the scenes in the variety theatres of thirty years ago, or even twenty years ago in most places. For that matter, it is in striking contrast to conditions today in the legitimate theatre, and even on Broadway.

The other day I had occasion to visit a star actor, in a brand-new theatre in New York. He was crowded into a narrow, coffin-like cement box. The only toilet facility was a washstand. The rough cement walls had never received a finishing coat, and were so dust-covered that the actor's dresser had to hang papers behind all the costumes to keep them clean. There were no elevators in that house, and no carpets to keep the feet and gowns of the actresses clean on their way to the stage. In fact, I thought there must be no broom in that theatre. Outside of New York, conditions are worse. Three years ago an actress told me she had to throw her shoes at the rats, in a theatre not 200 miles from Manhattan. In a large Massachusetts city conditions were so bad recently that a well-known actress complained to the mayor. Small wonder actors are willing to go into vaudeville!

Contrast that with the two vaudeville theatres Mr. Albee has erected in Cleveland. Here the vaudeville actors find dressing rooms with both tubs and shower baths, as well as upholstered couches to rest on; they find carpets and elevators; they find a laundry, a sewing room, a green room containing easy chairs and a piano, and even a nursery stocked with toys, where the children occasionally used in some act can be taken care of. The actors behind the scenes are just as well looked after as the public out front. They are regarded not only as human beings, but as peculiarly sensitive ones. The theatre Mr. Albee is now building in Brooklyn will be of the same type.

It is comparatively easy to see that when an audience made up, for the most part, of more or less humble people gets so much substantial elegance—and, of late years, in Mr. Albee's theatres so much good taste—in addition to a clean vaudeville entertainment, all for a moderate admission fee, they will patronize one of these theatres rather than any other, and they will come to feel a certain pride in it and from its cleanliness and order learn to use, not abuse it. But it is not so easy to see the business policy of carpeted dressing rooms, with shower baths and elevators. The artists have to work for Keith to earn their living, and, after all, bad dressing rooms have not kept the Barrymores and Warfields off the legitimate stage.

They have, however, materially helped to keep legitimate actors from going on tour. And, so far as vaudeville is concerned, the tour is everything. A performer stays but a week in one place. If he finds, from city to city, clean rooms, a chance to bath properly after a sweating dance, the courtesy of a well-oiled Keith staff, vaudeville is a much more attractive calling for him, he is more content with his work, and does it better. Mr. Albee is shrewd, and he knows all this. However, he and Keith both learned a passion for cleanliness from their Yankee mothers, and I doubt if his dressing rooms would be such models today if that were not the case, and if he were not also a kindly man, who really takes thought for the comfort of others. Also, he is proud of the name of vaudeville, and his dressing rooms are a symbol of that pride.

Albee's Desire to Perpetuate His Ideals

JUST as the cleaning up of American vaudeville, the elevation of variety to a position of luxury and self-respect, was the work of Keith and Albee, the present pleasant and comfortable relations of the actors to the managers is the work of Mr. Albee. So long as he lives, and has his great pride in this thing he has created, all will doubtless be well. But the future is a different matter.

It is impossible to ignore the fact that Mr. Albee was a child of Transcendental New England, with a lot of the Puritan in his make-up. Not only is the Yankee twang of his speech an oddity on twentieth-century Broadway, but his whole attitude differs from the attitude of the new race of speculators who have come into control of the playhouse. As shrewd as they, he yet has a pride in his business like that of an artist, a passion for cleanliness and order, sympathy and the spirit of coöperation. In a sense,

A luxurious lounge in the Cleveland theatre typical of new interiors built by Albee

therefore, his hardest work is still ahead of him, which is to provide for the perpetuation of his ideas and ideals.

So far as the management of individual houses is concerned, provision has been made, he thinks. Years ago, he started in to look for men of ideals and experience. He chose young men, most of them with some newspaper experience. He placed each of them in one of the important theatres on the Keith Circuit under a manager whom he had already tutored.

Finally, he was taught by Mr. Albee to deal with the public, the newspapers, with the officials of the city, with civic conditions. He was allowed to use his own initiative, to give the theatre for a public forum, and to do things which make it a civic institution. The majority of the Keith managers are interested in one way or another in the larger organization, also. These men are loyal to Mr. Albee's principles. They are anxious to carry out his ideas. They are thoroughly schooled in his way of doing things, and it is all done with the understanding that when Mr. Albee passes away, they are to take up his work and carry on.

This is the safeguard which Mr. Albee says is going to perpetuate the B. F. Keith enterprises.

But anything so wide-spread and involved as modern vaudeville must have a head. There must be centralization of management, and coöperation with the 20,000 players. The moment those players are treated unfairly, the moment they lose their self-respect, trouble will start again. Mr. Albee has builded his business so well, he has so humanized it, and also, perhaps, he has so paternalized it, so far as the actors are concerned, that only a very strong man can follow him. Who will that man be?

Not long ago at a dinner of the N. V. A., Fred Stone, beloved of all American playgoers, was elected president, and Mr. Albee, in a speech, said, "I have been asked many times who is going to carry on this work when I lay down the reins. I am going home tonight with a satisfied mind that we have found the man in Mr. Stone." An artist himself, a man of ability, of fine instincts respected on all sides, Fred Stone might be a logical choice. If he does take up Mr. Albee's work, at Mr. Albee's suggestion, it means that the reins of power are being handed over not to the business type of theatrical speculator, but to an artist. It means that Mr. Albee has been entirely sincere in all his work for the betterment of vaudeville—that vaudeville with him has been an art, not a mere commercial venture, and that he wants to leave it in control of the artists, not to the mere shopkeepers. That is as it should be.

But no successor, of course, can ever know quite the pleasure Mr. Albee has known, because no successor can create from nothing, as he did. We used to read a lot about "captains of industry." Mr. Albee has been one of those captains, surely, since his business stretches from coast to coast, employing thousands of people and representing the investment of millions of dollars. But he has been a captain of art, as well, which is much more thrilling. Unknown to most Americans, he sits above Broadway with the destinies of 20,000 actors and the amusements of 4,000,000 of his fellow countrymen under his control. It is no small responsibility to control the daily amusements of 4,000,000 people. It is a responsibility, in fact, far greater than any of us yet comprehend. Mr. Albee's real monument will not be the beautiful, costly theatres he has built, but the fact that this responsibility has made him think of service.

The Greatest Indictment

Seven Days

Where the Cruelty and Cupidity of by the Indifference

By Agnes Evon

THURSDAY morning there was a rumor in Constantinople that the Greek Army was retreating. On the shores of the Bosphorus one quickly learns to disregard rumors; only two weeks earlier rumor had said that the Greeks were about to take Constantinople. Resting, on my way home from Red Cross work in Czecho-Slovakia, I felt the political weariness of all relief workers in Europe when they are away from the job and can forget diplomacy and wars.

I was enjoying Constantinople, that village of three and a half millions of strange peoples, with its ludicrous, bargaining fire departments, its solitary porters carrying pianos on their backs, and its hawkers of sleeping powders adding their shrieks to the all-night bedlam. I was enjoying the camel caravans on the Galata bridge, the flocks of sheep hopelessly tangling traffic amid automobiles and street cars on the Grande Rue de Pera, the tea rooms crowded with jeweled women and officers in uniforms of all the nations. Rumor of Greek defeat changed nothing of all this, and I had not thought of it twice when Mr. Jacquith, director of the Near East Relief, telephoned me to come to the American Embassy.

At left, Greek priest in Smyrna's fire rescues a precious sewing machine. Below, a quiet spot among the debris on the quay at Smyrna. Allied warships in the distance

of Modern Civilization

in Smyrna

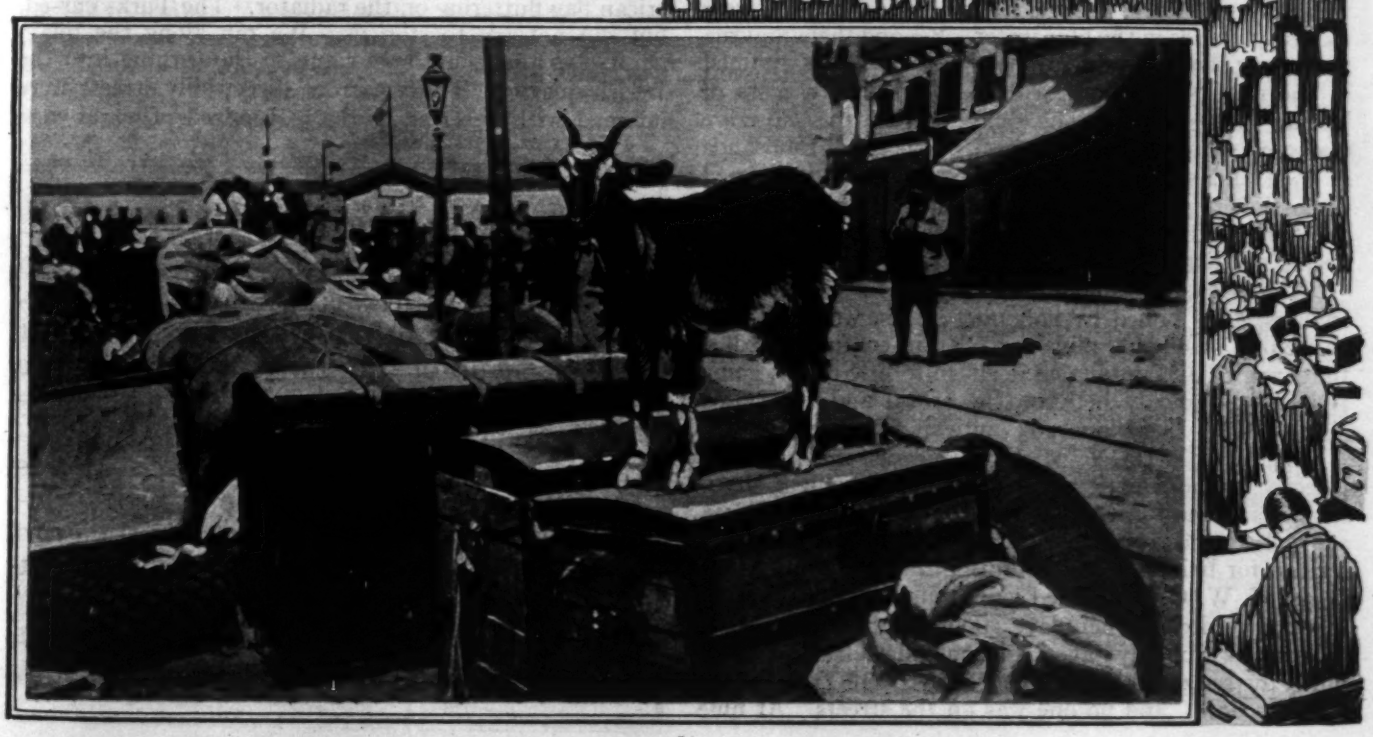
Individual Turks were Matched of Western Statesmen

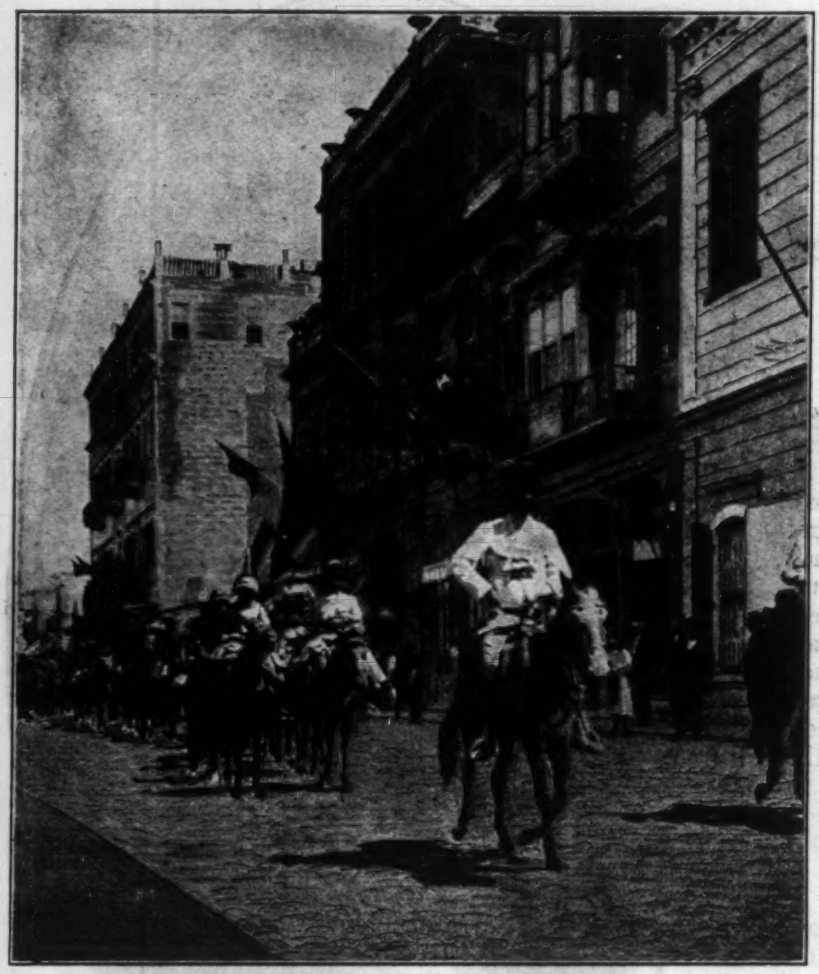
Illustrated with Remarkable Photographs Taken by Near East Relief

Representatives of all the American organizations in Constantinople were at the meeting. The Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the Red Cross, several business men unknown to me, Admiral Bristol, Mr. Jacquith, were forming an emergency committee. The situation, they felt, was serious. The Greek defeat was a rout, and refugees were pouring toward Smyrna with the demoralized army. No other news was obtainable, but the men and women around the table spoke of massacre. They were old workers in the Near East, and their voices carried conviction, though at that time the word could not mean to me what it meant to them. They spoke, too, of prompt action, and in less than twenty-four hours the first medical unit was on its way to Smyrna.

THERE were three of us: Doctor Post, who was in charge of the unit, and Miss Corning and I, nurses. We accompanied Mr. Jacquith on the American destroyer *Lawrence*. Leaving the Bosphorus late Friday afternoon, we woke on Saturday morning to see the low, barren coast of Asia Minor, just above the gulf of Smyrna. It appeared sterile

At right, The American flag on the stern of the destroyer "Litchfield" broods over the tragic spectacle of burning Smyrna. Below, a unique guardian of abandoned household goods





Historic photograph of the first triumphant Kemalist troops entering Smyrna just before the reign of terror

and uninhabited. From it rose five columns of smoke, licked at the base by flames. Doctor Post recognized them as burning villages.

AT eight o'clock the *Lawrence* rounded Tshaly Bornu, the old marshy mouth of the river Hermes, and we saw the gulf of Smyrna. A number of cruisers and destroyers, flying flags of Italy, France, England and America, were like gray islands in the blue water. Beyond them Smyrna was a long shallow arc of grayish-white buildings, rimmed at the water's edge with a dense black line, a mass of human beings on the long quay. When the *Lawrence* anchored we looked from its deck on scores of thousands of men and women, so tightly packed that it seemed impossible to get through them. Between this mass and the front of buildings the last of the Greek army was fleeing southward.

It was a strange and tragic thing to see—trotting soldiers, guns pulled by galloping mules, wounded men carried on shoulders, mule carts, all in confusion; a line that tangled and untangled itself, in frantic hurry, going jerkily but quickly between the crowd and the closed shop fronts. Every one was quite silent, watching it.

Mr. Burg of the Y. M. C. A. met us, and we went directly to the American consulate. The refugee situation was already grave. We had brought flour with us, as well as medical supplies, and an organization was formed for baking and distributing bread. Miss Nolan of the Y. W. C. A. offered us hospitality, and after the meeting we drove to her place. The streets were irregular and narrow, roughly paved, without sidewalks, and overhung by second stories. The shops were closed, iron shutters down, and no one was on the streets. At nine o'clock, the heat was already stifling. The only breeze was stirred by the automobile, and facing it was like looking into an oven.

Y. W. headquarters was in a walled compound, and perhaps two hundred Greek and Armenian women and children had taken refuge there. They were crowded into the courtyard, with bundles of bedding and food and cradles. Miss Nolan was having the gymnasium cleared to give them sleeping space on the floor. She was sheltering only women and children; their fathers, husbands and brothers must leave them at the gate.

WE stayed only a moment, and went on to the Greek quarter, near the northern end of the city. The Greek hospital was a large building, unwieldy because of its size and irregular shape, and the evacuation of Greek wounded had left it dirty and in great confusion. The director begged us to take the hospital and put up the American flag, but we decided that we must have a place which would waste less time in preliminary cleaning and organization. We listed supplies to be sent him, and promised to return.

To reach the Turkish hospital we were obliged to go quite to the other end of Smyrna. We drove from the Greek quarter through the Armenian quarter and down to the quay. It was like driving through a dead city: not a person was on the streets, not a window or door open. When we reached the quay we came at right angles into a line of Turkish cavalry.

It was moving in good order, slowly. The horses were exhausted, and their riders, who were not in uniform, unless beggar's rags may be called uniforms, were filthy. Their faces and their rags were literally caked with dirt. They had been riding twelve days and nights without rest, and looked as if they must drop from their horses. Beyond them the quay was deserted. The hundred thousand persons who had been on it an hour earlier had disappeared.

We drove through the line, with our three-inch American flag fluttering on the radiator. The Turks cursed, but did not try to stop us. We ran along the quay, parallel to them, until we came to the turning into the Jewish quarter. Those narrow, dirty, hilly streets were jammed with cheering Turks. Hundred of fezzes were

Can the World be Made

"SMYRNA was more than a Turkish atrocity; it was a failure of civilization. If our faith in life survives we must think again of the things that were done there. They are scientific data showing what humanity is like."

Thus writes Miss Agnes Evon in this uniquely powerful article which McCLURE'S publishes not alone for the grim and thrilling drama of the narrative, but also for the good of America's soul.

If, as Miss Evon exclaims, this world is ever to become a decent place to live in,

flying in the air. The cavalry line had gone to pieces; horses were rearing, riders shouting. Our car went into the mob and packed it tighter, for there was hardly room for us to pass between the shutters of the shops. A Turkish officer, trying to stop us, slashed at us with his sword and just missed the Red Cross band on my sleeve. We were all too much excited to be frightened, but we knew that we were in real danger. We could not stop; another car filled with Turkish officers was just behind us.

We came to a cleared space and saw a man naked to the waist, his hands tied behind him, standing against a shop front. Four Turkish soldiers, commanded by an officer, were taking aim at him from the other side of the street. We ran in front of them, and just at that moment our engine stalled. The officers in the car behind us stood up and shouted, the crowd jammed in on both sides and came up on our running boards. Our chauffeur was desperately struggling with the self-starter, every one was yelling around us, and the naked man slid down and went horribly struggling away among the legs, with his bound hands. I prayed that he would get away.

Miss Sarah Corning, nurse mentioned by Miss Evon as one of her co-workers, on board our destroyer "Litchfield," which rescued four hundred orphans

WE found the Turkish hospital in fair condition. The wards evacuated by the Greeks were being put in order for Turkish wounded. The Turkish doctor in charge thanked us for coming, but said that he did not need any help, so we did not stay long. The Turkish cavalry was still coming in, and the Turkish quarter was in an uproar. The rest of Smyrna was perfectly silent and motionless, but everywhere we went we felt that we were being watched by thousands of eyes that we could not see.

Relief workers will know how busy we were. We went to see Miss Mills at the American International College, and Miss Morley at the Armenian Girls' Orphanage. We had to get our supplies from the *Lawrence;* we had to arrange dozens of details. Smyrna was without a government or any organization; there were no porters, no telephone, no messengers. The heat was terrific, and the atmosphere of the city was like the pause before a thunderstorm. I have always been too busy with practical work to be imaginative, and I did not then know what human beings are capable of doing to others, but the atmosphere of Smyrna on that Saturday afternoon got on my nerves. Of course we could not bother about our nerves; we had too much to do. But I caught myself glancing up at the sky, expecting to see green-black clouds in it. I had an obsession that there would be thunder.

Smyrna was beautiful when we came up from the quay late that afternoon. The sunset gave the buildings pale shades of rose and cream, and the towers of St. Jean's Cathedral were sharp against a flat gold sky. The light went quickly, as it does before a storm, and with the first darkness the shooting began. After that it never quite stopped while we were in Smyrna.

THERE were only four American women at the Y. W., and one of us had to be on watch all the time. That first night we had no guards. The refugee women and children gave very little trouble; they were usually quite still, especially the children. We would go around among them, and then walk about the dark courtyard and go up on the roof and come down again. From the roof the city was quite dark; only little lights went about stealthily through the darkness. Two or three lights would come together and stop, and then there was a noise of doors smashing, and screams, and shots. Then you saw the lights going from window to window, up through the house, and you heard women shrieking and shrieking, and children screaming. All the time hundreds of dogs were barking, in sharp, hysterical yelps. When the screaming stopped in one house you heard it in others. The dogs never stopped barking.

a Decent Place to Live?

we must make ourselves realize that it is *not* a decent place today. We must no longer flatter ourselves that our one race is clean and innocent amid the brutal bickerings of other nations. While such things as Smyrna are tolerated, none of us is innocent.

The Smyrna fire began on September 13, 1922 and itself lasted three days. Miss Evon's is the most vivid and really adequate eye-witness account of the entire disaster which has been published in America since the tragedy occurred.

An extraordinary photograph of some of the three hundred human wall three miles long, with the blazing

Miss Agnes Evon, Nurse

THE author of this article, Miss Agnes Evon of Detroit, a nurse who served the Red Cross in Czecho-Slovakia, then went to Smyrna, and is now with the American Women's Hospitals doing refugee work in Athens among the victims of the Smyrna disaster.

It seemed impossible that we could do nothing. When no one could see me, sometimes I clenched my hands over my ears and stood there hanging on to self-control. I said to myself, isn't there enough decency in all humanity, is it possible that the decency of the world isn't strong enough, to keep such things from being done on this earth in this century?

WE were told that there would be only three days of looting and killing. It is the rule of war in Asia Minor; it is the way the soldiers are paid. For three days and nights the victors collect the spoils. The worst of the firing ceased at dawn, and even that day and the next there were Turkish soldiers begging on the streets. I remember the piteously famished and gentle face of one who asked me for five piasters. Perhaps he had been too tired, or too sick, to do any looting in the night. There were others who looked like one's most horrible nightmare of brigands. Many of the shops had been broken open and robbed bare. Scores of bodies were lying in the streets.

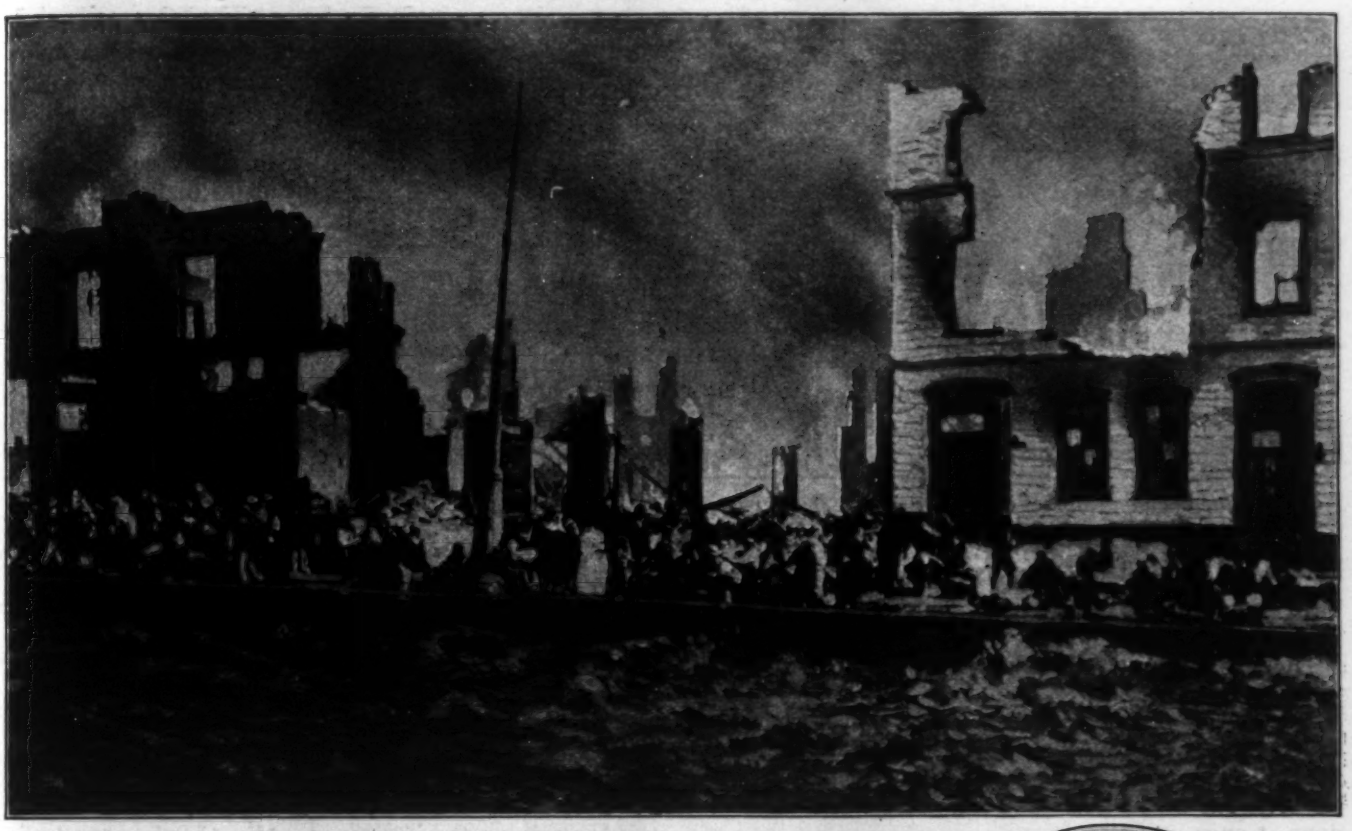
At first we stopped to make sure that they were not merely wounded, but they were all dead. Of all the thousands of bodies that we saw in Smyrna before we left, not one wore shoes. Sometimes they had been stripped of clothes; always the shoes had been taken, and beside every body was either a pair of shoes worn beyond all wearing, or two dirty heaps of rags in which feet had been wrapped.

THAT day we unloaded medical supplies and started a clinic at the Y. W. We took over little Dutch hospital, in the adjoining compound of the Netherland's consulate, and began the bread distribution. We also called at the konak to see the Turkish authorities and insist that the bodies be removed from the streets. The weather was so hot that there was immediate danger of epidemics.

Nothing was done with the bodies that day or the next day, and every morning there were hundreds more. We were all so busy and so exhausted in the heat and the stench that we talked very little when we met. But Doctor Post told us one thing that I remember. He remonstrated with the Turkish commandant, Nuridin Pasha, about the killing, and Nuridin Pasha answered, "You have a saying in your country, 'America for the Americans.' We say, 'Turkey for the Turks.' You have another saying, 'The good Indian is a dead Indian.' Well, we believe that the good Armenian is a dead Armenian.'"

Numbers of women in premature childbirth were coming in, and many wounded as well. Then there was the task of feeding all the women and children who were taking refuge at the Y. W. Every morning I went to the Y. M. to take some of the Armenians from there in search of food. Eight or ten of them would come out, and I would march at the head of the little column through the Armenian quarter. When we came to a shop belonging to one of them, if it had not yet been looted and if no Turks were in sight, he went in and lowered the shutter again behind him. We went on, dropping them one at a time, and then came back picking them up.

They brought sacks of beans, flour, and canned milk



thousand people who fled for refuge to the quay, forming a city behind them and the Aegean Sea in front

to the Y. W. and were rewarded by seeing for a few minutes their wives and children. Then I marched the men back to safety at the Y. M. These were, I think, the only living Armenians on the streets from Saturday to Wednesday, and the only Greek men I saw were gangs of prisoners, bound together, being driven through Turkish crowds that cursed and struck them. The Greek officers had abandoned hundreds of their men in the last panic of getting away.

On Tuesday afternoon we drove to the Armenian hospital with Doctor Post. Bad as it was to walk, it was worse to take the car, for by this time the streets of the Armenian quarter were so covered with things thrown from the houses—tableclothes, curtains, clothing—that we could not see the dead. I walked in front of the car, poking with my cane, and when a body was in the middle of the street Doctor Post and I lifted it to one side. We did not want to run over it.

THE hospital gate was at the end of a passage between buildings, and twenty-five Turkish soldiers and an officer were watching it. The hospital guard at first refused to open the gate. But there was an old cart near by, and when we had put it on end, to hide the opening of the gate from the Turks, we were allowed to squeeze through. In the courtyard of the hospital were more than three thousand Armenians—men, women and children. When they saw that we were Americans—but I am not going to remember what it sounded like. They had been there twenty-four hours without food or water, and they were ordered to go out into the streets at eight o'clock that night.

It is a horrible fact that I felt something like angry impatience with that crowd. They were so cringing. Their faces were a greenish white, like faces in the light of a mercury tube. Fear had generated a poison that colored their skin. How could they sit there and endure it? I do not know. Rather than submissively suffer such terror,

ONE of the tiny orphans rescued by Americans in the Smyrna disaster that horrified the entire world. Miss Evon writes that during all the madness of their elders not a child made any noise or shed a tear, but stoically bore indescribable hardships.

A little Armenian Refugee

rather even than stay there and see them suffer it, I would have smashed that gate and gone out and fought with my hands until I was killed. But there was no resistance in them. The only energy was in the women, who fought each other to reach us and try to force their babies into our arms.

The director of the hospital asked us only to try to persuade the Turks to withdraw the order to evacuate that night. Miss Corning and I went through the maternity ward, doing what we could, while Doctor Post went to the konak. I suppose he threatened publicity in America; they say that the Turks are concerned about American public opinion. Whatever he did, he was successful in getting an order postponing the evacuation of the hospital until the next morning. It was at least a commutation of the death sentence. There was so little that any of us could do.

THAT afternoon there was another result from our persistent nagging. The Turks began cleaning the streets and removed ten wagonloads of dead. Mustapha Kemal Pasha had arrived, and we hoped that the killing and looting would end. All the large Armenian and Greek shops were being systematically emptied of goods;

A courageous mother leads her little child and crippled grandmother into exile on some fever-wracked Aegean island

we were told that they were for the Turkish officers. But on Tuesday night, the fourth night, the shooting was worse than before.

At two o'clock Wednesday afternoon I had stopped for a few minutes to take a shower and change my clothes, when Doctor Post knocked on the door and called me to dress and come at once. There was a serious fire in the Armenian quarter, and we must get the children out of the Armenian orphanage. It had to be done at once.

There had been several alarms of fire, but only a few houses had burned. Smyrna was built of stone and plaster, but there was a great deal of woodwork in balconies, outside stairways, and even cross-timbers in walls. Some second stories were entirely of wood. I suppose an accidental fire might have gained headway without assistance. On the other hand, we had been pounding at the authorities with threats of an epidemic, and perhaps fire seemed to them the simplest way of cleaning the Armenian quarter. I do not know how the fire started; I know only that it was beyond control when we reached the Armenian Girls' Orphanage. The streets and the courtyard were almost unbearably hot and filling with smoke and cinders.

The quaint Smyrna fire department resting on its laurels after the conflagration had done its worst

The hundred and fifty little girls, all in black-and-white checked aprons, were perfectly quiet and obedient. There was no time to save anything but their lives. We sent them out two by two, following Jean Christie and Miss Morley, who carried an American flag. Miss Corning was to guard the middle of the column, and Doctor Post and I were to bring up the rear. A hundred of the black and white aprons had been counted out of the gate, when suddenly the whole back of the courtyard was trampled down. Some one had seen that the Orphanage was evacuating, and hundreds of men and women came straight through the mud-brick wall and down upon us, mad with hope of getting away under our flag.

We had been standing by the gate, counting out the pairs of little checked aprons, and suddenly there were no more of them. The gateway jammed with the crowd that hung there an instant, struggling to get through. Then the crush broke, and the mob struck us, and the gateway jammed again.

The fire was almost on us, and after all they had endured one can't blame those Armenians for being crazy with terror as they were. They did not care who was trampled under their feet; they wanted only to get away. We went at them and fought. When a black-and-white apron came into sight we all went for it, kicking and striking and dragging the child to her feet somehow. Miss Corning had a little fat Bible in her hand—I don't know where it had come from—and she was beating at a big Armenian man who was trampling on a child, when suddenly a Turkish soldier yelled and lunged at the Armenian with his bayonet. Miss Corning struck the Turk between the eyes with the Bible, and he went down in a heap. I don't know what became of him; we were dragging out the child. The strange thing was that in all the madness not one of those little girls made any noise or shed a tear.

We saved the whole fifty of them, and got them through the crowd to join the others. They went on to the quay with Miss Morley and Miss Christie, and we went back to the Y. W. The fire was near, and Miss Nolan was taking our refugees to the quay. The streets of the Armenian and Greek quarters were pouring out streams of people. All the patients that could be moved had gone from our little Dutch hospital. The doctor and the Greek attendants would not leave the others; they felt that it was their duty to stay. The hospital was stone, in a large courtyard, and there was a chance that they could live through the fire.

We had done all that could be done, and Doctor Post ordered us to meet him at the American consulate. He was going to the Y. M. Miss Corning and I were in the entrance hall at the Consulate, when a big marine from the *Lawrence* came in and ordered us to go with him. I sat on a table, swinging my feet, and said that I could not leave without orders from Doctor Post. The marine did not stop to argue; he swooped up my bag with one hand, grabbed my wrist with the other, and went.

He chose a short cut to the quay, through alleys and courtyards and over five water buffalo lying in a puddle. That long-legged marine jumped over them, dragging me, slipping and sliding over their backs. That frightened me. I don't like water buffaloes; they seem more subhuman than any other animals, except snakes.

On the quay the marine fought through the mob, jerked me into a boat, and went back to help Miss Corning. The crowd on the quay was an enormous madhouse ward, and the heat of the fire was already a torture. We were rowed away from it to the *Lawrence*. The whole northern third of the city's arc was hidden in black smoke reddened by flames.

There were nearly two hundred thousand human beings packed on the quay, between the flames and the water. The destroyers and cruisers of Italy, France, England and America lay there, watching them. There were only a few rowboats. These few were already filled with refugees, rowing around and around the ships. They were not permitted to get on board. Many persons, especially women, were drowned in swimming from one ship to another. Now and then, against orders, a crew would fish some one out of the water. There had been only two boats that could take refugees; the *Hog Island*, a U. S. Shipping Board ship, and the *Winona*, an American freighter. The *Hog Island* left without taking a refugee. The *Winona* was anchored not far from the quay. Some thousands of refugees had got on to several lighters, and pushed out from shore to escape the heat.

American sailors rescue an aged Greek priest who had been badly beaten during the looting of the city

A message came from the *Winona*, asking for nurses. Miss Corning and I went over. The crew had taken on board about two hundred men and women, who were crowded aft on deck. There were many bayonet and bullet wounds. We had only first aid kits with which to work, on the open deck, and the difficulties of sterilization and proper dressings were heartbreaking. The captain of the *Winona* was in a violent temper, swearing about his loss of cargo. I asked him how many refugees he could take, and he became more violent, exclaiming, "Refugees! Refugees! Who's going to pay me for carrying —— —— refugees?" We told him that the Near East Relief would pay him.

We could not leave our patients, and spent the night on the *Winona*, doing all that we could. In any case, we could not have slept. We were quite near the shore; we could hear the fire and feel its heat. The crowd moaned on the quay, and women shrieked. When the screams became unbearable, one of the Italian cruisers would swing a searchlight slowly across the quay to frighten away the Turks, and then the shrieks would stop for awhile. At intervals, all night, we heard volleys of shooting, which seemed to come from the fire. We did not know what they were. Refugees told us later that the Turks, going through the crowd on the quay and taking away the men and boys, were driving them into the burning quarters and shooting them. I do not know that this was true. I know only that the Turks did drive away the men, and that we heard the shooting.

We left the *Winona* early in the morning. The hundred and fifty little girls of the Armenian orphanage were somewhere in that agony on the quay, and we must get them out of it. Before I left the *Winona* I begged the captain to wait, to let us load the ship with refugees. He asked again, who would pay him? I assured him that he would be paid.

The water between the quay and the ships was full of bodies of men and women, drowned while swimming. The destroyers were war ships; it was against regulations for them to take on board any one save citizens of the countries they represented. The two hundred thousand human beings on the quay in the heat of the fire and the

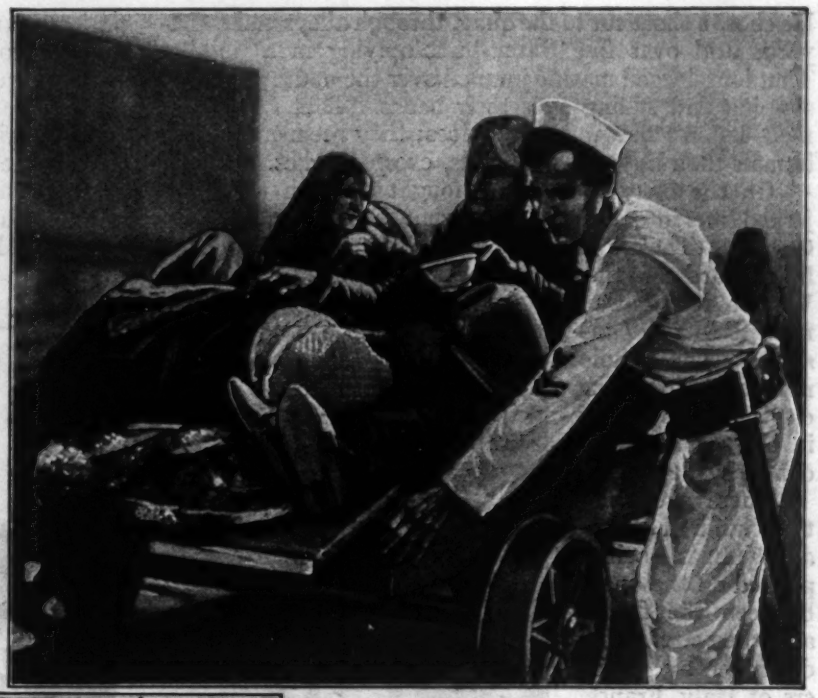
One of the many pathetic family groups stranded on the Smyrna quay during the evacuation of the city

sun had no water. Turks were going among them, taking away the men and boys and some of the girls. It was against orders for us to land, but we landed, and found the hundred and fifty little girls in their black and white checked aprons huddled together. Miss Morley and the American flag were with them.

GETTING them off to the *Winona* was a long, difficult task. The water was rough and full of bodies, and we had to drop the children into the rowboat one by one, and when it was filled wait for it to come back. I say nothing of the scenes on the quay, where women had gone mad and were laughing, where hundreds of babies were being born. We had got seventy of the little girls off to the *Winona*, when the *Winona* lifted anchor and left. It could have taken at least a thousand more of the people on the quay who watched it go.

By this time they had learned that, while the Italian and French destroyers could not take on board any one who was not a French or Italian citizen, those citizenships could be bought. Those who had been able to reach the quay with some money, and who had not yet been robbed by the Turks, paid five hundred and a thousand liras each for these so-called citizenships, which meant life. The destroyers carried them as far as Mytilene and dumped them on that island, penniless.

Is there any value in telling these things? One can bear suffering, but Smyrna shakes the fundamental faith that keeps us alive. The concerted greed and cruelty of nations and of thousands of individuals created the horror on the quay of Smyrna; the combined forces of decency in the world produced us, the handful of men and women who were there to fight that horror, and were helpless against it. Smyrna was more than a Turkish atrocity; it was, rather, a failure of humanity.



Above, "Gobs" from the American destroyers in the harbor played a heroic rôle in the rescue work after the great fire. At left, British sailors come to the aid of agonized and bewildered refugees on the Smyrna railroad pier

But if our faith in life survives, then there is a value in knowing the things that were done at Smyrna. They are scientific data showing what humanity is. If, somehow, through the ages, this world is to be made a decent place, then we must know clearly, now, that it is not a decent place. We must not any longer deceive ourselves by thinking that one race, one nation, one group—the group to which we happen to belong—is clean and innocent. None of us are innocent. The atrocity of Smyrna was the crime of the organized politics of the world, and the cruelty and cupidity of individual Turks were matched by the cupidity and indifference of Western men.

In McCLURE'S MAGAZINE Next Month

ONE NIGHT OVER THE LINES——*By* MAJOR "TOM" VIGORS

THROUGHOUT America there has been of late a tremendous increase of interest in aviation. The non-stop transcontinental flight caught the public fancy; the attempted sunrise-to-sunset coast-to-coast flight stirred the interest still further; and current news of the contest in aviation development between France, Great Britain and Japan has awakened us to our own deficiency in air power.

As an extraordinarily fascinating sidelight on military aviation do not miss next month Major "Tom" Vigors' amazing aerial adventures during the World War.

In an Inaccessible Canyon Joe Melrose Finds

A Subject For Investigation

By James Howard Hull

Illustrations by Douglas Duer

BRISTLING with outraged official dignity, Joe Melrose was lounging behind the stove in the corner of the cabin, recording in his diary the drab events of the day. For two months he had been a duly-constituted forest ranger, and he was wondering if the ancient New York paper Charley Helmar was reading by the light of a kerosene lamp on the table, happened to be the one which mentioned his appointment.

He must of course record the day's doings in his diary. But how could any self-respecting forest ranger clutter up his diary with such an entry? How it would look!

Tues., July 6, 1922

Dug post holes all forenoon with Ranger Helmar, for ranger station horse pasture. P. M., rode over to Nelson's ranch to tell old man Nelson to bring up two spools of barbed wire the next time he made a trip in.

So humiliating a confession was indeed unnecessary. There were ways of modulating so unromantic a truth. Contemptuously Joe Melrose scratched on the three-by-six yellow page, as follows:

Tues., July 6, 1922

Miscellaneous executive duties.

The cabin was quiet. The other ranger was absorbed in the month-old news of the world at large.

"Well, I've charged up today to miscellaneous executive duties," Joe announced affably.

"Did!" Helmar looked up and his eyes indexed mirth.

"Sure. It was that, wasn't it?"

Helmar fell back into his somewhat superior manner.

"No. Nothing executive about diggin' post holes, is there? No, that won't do at all. Seems like you never would learn. Lemme see your diary. I'll write up today for you; show you how it ought to be done."

Resentfully, Joe handed over the diary. Rosy castles of romance were demolished as he watched the left corner of Helmar's mouth twist in sympathetic coördination with every fatal motion of the pen. It was written in ink. It could never be erased. Post holes and barbed wire! Could anything be less worthy of a federal officer with an olive uniform and badge? But he was here for instruction, and it would never do to argue about a thing like that with a man who had been in the Service nine years.

More for the purpose of concealing his feelings than anything else, Joe continued:

"There's one thing about this business, Charley, that I never did find out for sure."

Helmar twisted the stubby ends of his gray mustache, and his eyes alone laughed.

The report of a rifle roared out down the trail he had just traversed. A second shot whistled over his head. Joe noticed an uprooted spruce tree four feet in diameter blocking his trail ahead. He thought of jumping for cover, but the pinto rose with the nimbleness of a deer. A quick jolt. The obstacle was behind them!

"There's hopes for you, then. As far as I've observed, everything you do know, you know for sure."

"Is a forest ranger a game warden, Charley, or isn't he?" asked Joe.

"Sure, a forest ranger's a game warden—ex officio. A forest ranger's ex officio everything: game warden, deputy sheriff, community blacksmith, private secretary for all homesteaders that can't write, public stenographer consulting hydraulic engineer, and——"

"Does he have to be ex officio game warden whether he wants to be or not?"

"No. Don't have to be. Can't be, if he wants to do anything else. To enforce the game laws around here would take a separate game warden for each wild critter in the country — to ride along behind for a sort of chaperon.'' Helmar chuckled and then pulled the gray ends of his stubby mustache thoughtfully. "No, I usually leave 'em alone. Regular duties first and these here ex officio things second, if there's any time left."

"I just wanted to know," Joe went on, "because this afternoon when I was over on the ridge trail south of Castle Creek——"

"The ridge trail! What did you do, climb a horse up through all that down timber? Nobody's been over that trail for five years. The best way to get to Nelson's ranch is——"

"I know, but I thought this might be quicker. I looked down from the ridge and saw a man with a deer packed on his riding saddle. He saw me, too, I guess. He was down near that old cabin on Castle Creek."

"Who was he?"

"Too far off to see. Tall and lanky, about my build."

"Don't believe I know him," Helmar muttered, taking up his paper again. "I don't know anybody around here that's as tall and lanky as you are, and I don't know who could be stoppin' over in that god-forsaken neck of the woods." And thus dismissing the subject, Helmar returned to his reading.

At the end of two dull minutes, Joe broke the silence.

"It's out of season for deer."

"Yes," Helmar agreed absently, still reading.

"What are we going to do tomorrow, Charley?"

"Dig post holes." Helmar read on.

Joe felt himself suddenly paralyzed in a violent grasp

Joe Melrose devoted the next five minutes to resentful, but somewhat honest introspection. He could dig more post holes in a day than Charley Helmar could. He was not too proud to dig post holes. At least, he protested with himself that he was not. But to be compelled to record it in an official diary was an insult to the badge and olive uniform which distinguished him as a forest ranger. It was the diary alone that constituted a fatal objection. And why couldn't Helmar at least talk about something more interesting than barbed wire and post holes?

"How do you go about it, Charley, to pinch a man for game laws?" Joe asked, after another silence.

"H'm? Oh—tell him to report to Jim Stone at Freedom."

"Then what do you do?" he persisted.

"Write him a letter, about it. J. R. Stone. Freedom."

"Who's Stone?"

"Deputy State game warden. All a ranger's supposed to do is cooperate with the State. Never has to make any arrests unless a man shoots at him or something. In that case he might have to take a man along with him."

"What court does Stone turn a man over to, after you make him a report like that?"

Helmar again had his eyes on the ancient newspaper.

"Don't turn him over to no court. Turns him loose for lack of evidence," he muttered. Then he looked up, and his eyes were suddenly mirthful. "Why?"

"I was just thinking that perhaps I might take a ride over to Castle Creek tomorrow, and look into things a little. I could get the evidence all right, and tell that fellow I saw with the deer to report to Jim Stone."

Helmar gazed at him in astonishment and chuckled.

"You've talked yourself into a job, right now! Tomorrow morning I want you to ride over to Castle Creek, find that fellow you spoke of, tell him to report for trial, and get the evidence. Fetch in a fresh deerskin or something."

"I'll do it!"

"No, you won't." Helmar's brown eyes blazed supreme mirth, and his mouth twisted to a severe grin. "I'll bet you a box of cigars you won't. You'll ride over

there, all right, and tie your horse in front of the cabin. Then you'll go in, and he'll say he's glad to see you, and dinner's about ready. You'll visit with him, and eat some of his venison, and maybe he'll offer you a hind quarter. You'll stay all night with him, and have breakfast, and come away with no more evidence than a jack rabbit!"

"A box of cigars?" Joe beamed.

"I'll bet you a box of cigars you don't tell him to report to Jim Stone. If you tell him, he'll do it all right. You're darn right, he'll report if a man with a uniform and a forest ranger's badge on comes up and tells him to! But you won't tell him to. It takes a man with experience to put over a job like that. It ain't quite as easy as it seems."

"I'LL take the box of cigars," Joe exulted. "And my twenty-sixth birthday is the second of August."

Helmar's face was suddenly stern.

"All right. This is no joke, now. I'm sending you over to straighten the thing up, and do a clean job. You're under orders from me for the next four months—till your probational period's over. And if you fall down on it, that has to go in on your efficiency report when I make it, the first of October. Your instructions are to tell him to report to Stone, get the evidence, and if he makes any fuss about it, fetch him in yourself."

Long before sunrise Joe Melrose caught the black horse with a white star on his forehead, and rode up to the steps for a last word.

"Got a gun?" Helmar inquired, with the faintest note of repressed sympathy in his voice.

"Don't need one. Safer without."

"Wait. I'll get mine for you." Helmar was too solemn. "Nobody ever accused you of being proud of yourself or anything. If I should give you three foot of rope, you'd hang yourself with it!" He stepped back into the cabin and returned with a new and little-used pistol. "Well, good luck to you. You'll need it."

"I'll need the gun?"

"No. The luck. To get through this world alive, a man has to have good sense or uncommon good luck. You'll have to have the luck."

The morning was crisp and cool. The black horse struck a brisk running-walk, and the six miles were covered in good time. Arriving at the open flat where the cabin was visible, he rode briskly up to the door.

An unusual-looking pinto stood saddled and tied to a scrub pine close by. It appeared that the man within was about to depart, for a pair of saddlebags lay on a fallen tree close to the horse, and piled near by were various personal belongings, and a small supply of provisions. The man was packing up for an early start.

Joe waited three minutes. Why didn't the fellow come out? There was not a sound within the cabin. Then he dismounted, left his reins dragging, and, without knocking, threw the door open and entered.

A QUICK motion caught his eye. He felt himself paralyzed in a violent grasp. That was all. Time passed. He realized that he had struck the floor, and that his head was throbbing furiously. Once he fancied that he had risen to his feet and that all was well. Then a dull ache and a flash of consciousness told him he was still lying on the floor of the cabin, face-downward. He opened his eyes, sat up, and staggered to his feet. "Must have got tapped on the bean," he muttered to himself, placing a hand tenderly on that portion of his anatomy.

Recovering rapidly, he opened the door and looked out. The sun was high overhead. He looked at his watch. Ten-thirty! He had lain there unconscious for three hours. Then he took note of a few other things. A horse was standing tied to a scrub pine near by. It was the same pinto he had seen upon entering. What had become of his own horse? Another thing seemed strange. His clothes did not seem to fit him. He took one mystified look. He no longer wore the olive uniform! "The son-of-a-gun! Swapped clothes with me; and swapped horses."

It was defiance. He had not come prepared for violence of this sort. Of course, he had brought Helmar's pistol, but had no thought of using it. He felt for the weapon in the other man's coat pocket. The pistol was gone.

Joe dropped down on the hewn surface of the crumbling log which served as a doorstep. How had the fellow guessed that his errand was unfriendly? He had intended only to speak to him with well-poised official dignity, and ask him to report to Jim Stone at Freedom. His motives had been guessed too accurately, and been taken too seriously. He missed his badge, and his olive uniform, and the stiff-brimmed hat with its rattlesnake-skin band. Thus shorn of his dignity, he must now ride back on another man's horse, and relate his misfortune to Charley Helmar.

It could not be done! This little undertaking, by Helmar's own statement, would constitute a part of the report which would terminate his probational period of appointment. And a box of cigars was involved. And Charley Helmar possessed a sense of humor!

Within the cabin were supplies enough to last two months. The man who had stopped here had evidently planned to remain a long time, but had suddenly changed his mind and decided to leave. It was a lonely old canyon. What could a man be doing here, anyway? Joe nibbled a few cold baking-powder biscuits, found some cold coffee and a quantity of boiled venison. His head throbbed less intensely.

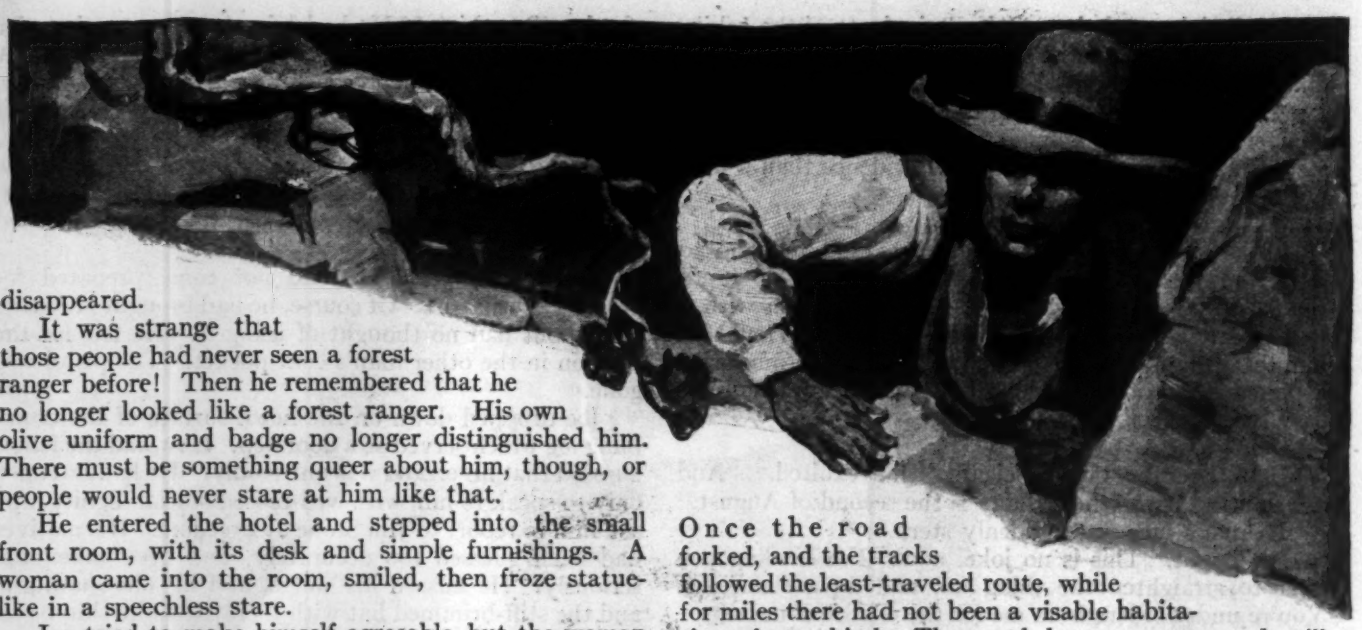
BEFORE noon he was planning rapidly. The pinto stood with drooping head, watching him. He removed the saddle, smoothed out the saddle-pad and was soon mounted on his new horse. He noted that the stirrups were exactly the right length for him. The owner of the pinto was apparently a man of his own proportions, tall and lanky.

Long before he had gained the main trail, down the steep, rocky pathless canyon, he found that the stranger's horse possessed a sureness of foot and a facility in the mountains that was nothing short of miraculous.

At the main trail he paused. He knew the tracks of his own horse. They headed southward. He would follow those tracks to the end of the earth. He would return when he had overtaken the fellow and balanced accounts—not until then.

To cover seven or eight miles of exceedingly poor trail, consumed the next three hours. Then the thoroughfare descended along an evenly-sloping hogback ridge to the main road along the river. The road was little traveled, and even here the tracks could be easily followed. Now and then he passed a fairly good house and barn, with horses grazing behind barbed-wire fences. He was coming into the town of Gibson.

There was one general store, a partially-denatured saloon, and a hotel. He halted in front of the Gibson House, left the pinto at the tie-pole across the way, and stepped to the door. He saw two men come out of the store across from the hotel. They took one look at the pinto, stared over at him for a second, whispered to each other, and ran back into the store. Then several other men crowded to the door, looked at him, and at once



Once the road forked, and the tracks followed the least-traveled route, while for miles there had not been a visable habitation of any kind. The road became worse and still worse, and at length lost itself in a mere creek-bottom trail, following up a good-sized stream. Here and there fallen logs blocked the way, but the indomitable pinto seemed able to jump almost anything. Before night closed in, Joe acquired a profound admiration for the tireless creature. He wondered if the little rat could climb trees!

Darkness came again, and the tracks were hard to follow. Joe dismounted, and with the reins still in his left hand, reached into one of the saddlebags and stood nibbling a sandwich.

Still gripping the reins, he dropped the sandwich with a sudden start. Splintered bark flew from the spruce tree, close to his head, and the report of a rifle roared out a hundred yards down the trail which he had just traversed. Another shot whistled over his head, and the horse reared.

The fellow knew, then, that he was being followed, and meant to put up a fight! And Joe himself was unarmed. There was only one thing to do—escape. In a flash he was in the saddle, and the pinto bounded away up the canyon. Shot after shot rang out behind him, in the dim twilight. Fortunately, it was already too dark for good shooting.

He gave one quick look over his shoulder. A horse and rider loomed into view a hundred yards behind him! His mind buzzed with a suddenly-discovered truth. That horse was not black. It was a dull strawberry roan. Had the fellow changed horses? That was impossible, for the tracks he had been following still indicated that one shoe was missing. And how did the man get behind him, around those inaccessible slopes?

THERE was no time to think. The pinto seemed to understand. With a fury of motion the little horse tore on up the canyon and was immediately concealed from view. An uprooted spruce tree had fallen directly across the trail just ahead. It was hopeless! The trail ahead was blocked. That tree was four feet in diameter, and to pick out a way around it through the downtimber and rocks and underbrush would require at least twenty minutes. Joe thought of jumping for cover. But the pinto tore on, without relinquishing his speed by so much as a stumble.

Could he make it? Could any horse make a leap like that? Joe leaned forward and gripped the saddle horn with both hands. The pinto rose with the nimbleness of a deer. A quick jolt. The obstacle was behind them!

disappeared.

It was strange that those people had never seen a forest ranger before! Then he remembered that he no longer looked like a forest ranger. His own olive uniform and badge no longer distinguished him. There must be something queer about him, though, or people would never stare at him like that.

He entered the hotel and stepped into the small front room, with its desk and simple furnishings. A woman came into the room, smiled, then froze statue-like in a speechless stare.

Joe tried to make himself agreeable, but the woman seemed so ill at ease that in spite of himself he spoke sternly.

"Did you see a man pass here with a black horse? White star on his forehead and——"

"Yes, yes," she croaked hastily. "Forest ranger on a black horse. Excuse me, I've got to look after them biscuits."

Joe fired a question after her. "How long ago?"

SHE hardly hesitated. "Two hours ago. The men across the way can tell you all about it."

"Could I get a room here, tonight? And put up the horse?"

She seemed frightened. She was trembling!

"Sorry, but all our rooms are taken for tonight."

She slipped away. Joe waited, but she did not return. Slowly he departed, and with mystified deliberation crossed the street to the store.

There was an eager face in the window, behind a display of saddles and tinwear. It immediately disappeared. He climbed the steps and entered. The store was empty of all human beings. He waited, stamped up and down in order to attract attention and make his presence known. No one came to inquire what he wanted.

It was useless to remain. The people of this town were evidently not friendly to strangers. After all, he had found out what he wanted to know. The man he was following had passed, some two hours ago, and had been promptly mistaken by every one for a forest ranger.

He untied the pinto, climbed to the saddle, and was again on his way. Once he turned and looked back. Two men were staring at him from the store steps, and a woman was viewing him from the front door of the hotel.

Again outside the village, he followed the tracks easily. Here there had been little travel. The black horse which had been his own had lost a shoe from the right hind foot. That made it all the easier to identify the trail.

But at the end of three miles, darkness overtook him. The tracks could no longer be followed. In a little open spot among the pines, not far from the road, Joe untied the blanket from behind the saddle, uncoiled a long rope which hung from the leather strings, staked the pinto on good grass, and retired for the night.

Long before sunrise he was on his way again, following the tracks. That man on the black horse, which had been his own, had apparently not stopped to camp for the night. The fellow had gained ten hours on him already.

"Put 'em up!" Joe called from his cave in the cliff. Instantly the water pail left the man's hand and fell to the ground. In its place was a pistol

Somewhat less recklessly now the pinto picked his way. He seemed to realize the necessity of going silently. Joe stroked him. "Good old Pinto!" he murmured.

Darkness came quickly, and the horse, choosing the course of retreat with no interference from the rider, seemed to be heading in a definite direction. The trail had been growing worse and worse, and the stream was becoming smaller and smaller. From time to time the creek forked and the horse chose without hesitation between two almost inaccessible canyons, always keeping to the creek bottom.

JOE folded his arms and the pinto picked his way on and on. Hours passed. The horse at least knew where he was going. In the morning it would be easy to find the way out, and back to Charley Helmar.

It must have been nearly midnight when the canyon they were following narrowed down to a mere groove between perpendicular rocks on either side. Joe looked up, and occasionally caught sight of a tiny patch of open sky. The cliffs were evidently hundreds of feet high.

For a half hour the canyon continued, with high perpendicular rocks on either side. The pinto occasionally slipped on the smooth wet stream-bed. Then the stars appeared again, and the country was open and flat and grassy. The horse halted, shook himself wearily, and heaved a deep breath.

Joe climbed stiffly out of his seat, took off the saddle and removed the bridle. It would be safe to turn the faithful fellow loose here. The horse had known of this place and had brought him straight to it.

Leaving the horse, Joe walked about the meadow, and looked up at the formidable wall of cliffs which entirely surrounded it. No man and no animal could ever climb those cliffs, either up or down. The route they had traveled was the only entrance, and there was no other exit. In area, the flat meadow was about ten acres, apparently an ancient lake-bed.

Satisfied that the horse would still be at hand in the morning, Joe stooped to untie the blanket from behind the saddle. Here he would be safe. He might even build a campfire, but there was nothing to cook. In the morning he would catch the pinto again, ride down the canyon, and return to tell Charley Helmar he was beaten. How he hated it! Wearily he dragged the saddle and bridle under a thicket of spruce, and rolled up in the blanket.

He closed his eyes and grew drowsy. There were noises in the meadow. The pinto, having rested a half hour, was moving about, feeding. Then there came the call of a horse. Joe sat up. Another horse answered. He rubbed his eyes, and peered through the darkness. In the dim light he could see the outlines of two horses, with noses close together.

There was no more sleep. If there was a horse here, there must be a man. He thought of walking around the place to see if he could discover the camper. He was hungry, and the thought of finding another human being in this utterly isolated spot thrilled him with a comfortable hope. Then he slept soundly for three hours.

The sky was gray when he awoke. He peeked out from beneath the spruce boughs that hung close over him, concealing him from view. There were indeed two horses, and it had been no quaint dream. One was the pinto. And the other—it was black, with a white star on the forehead. His own horse!

HE remained hidden, and watched silently, trying to solve the puzzle. Sunlight was crawling down from the tops of high cliffs to the west. Still he remained hidden, not daring to move.

At the end of a half hour, a tall man came sauntering across the flat toward the pinto. For the first time Joe noticed a cabin, almost concealed across the meadow. The tall man was dressed in an olive uniform, though he wore no coat or hat. Here was the man he had come to get!

The stranger approached the pinto, and stroked the pink nose.

"Did he turn you loose, Pinto? Or did he put you in

a pasture? Didn't he know you any better than that? I knew you'd come back, Pinto."

Joe lay quiet, scarcely daring to breathe. One thing was accounted for, anyway. This man had lived here a long time, and the pinto, given the liberty to choose the course, had merely come home. But that did not account for the shots of last night. Who had fired them? The man who had fired at him last night rode a strawberry roan. He was sure of that.

For the first time Joe wished he had Helmar's pistol. But still he had the distinct advantage of being present without being discovered. Perhaps there would be some way of surprising the fellow unarmed. Then the rest would be simple. If he only had Helmar's pistol!

As the man with the olive uniform went back into the cabin, Joe thought of a plan. It would not be necessary to have a pistol, as long as he had the drop, and could make the fellow believe it.

HE crawled cautiously back to the high steep rocks, close to a clear spring. A well-traveled footpath leading to the spring, indicated that the water was used daily for all purposes. The man would visit this spring sometime within a few hours. Joe crouched in the tall grass, studied the cabin closely to make sure no one was in sight, scrutinized the jutting cliffs close above the spring, and grinned triumphantly.

Exposing himself to view for only a short period, he scrambled some fifteen feet up the steep rocks. Luck was with him. There was a cavity big enough for him to crawl into, and in front of it was a barricade of rocks, high enough to conceal him from view.

He crawled in. The place was actually comfortable. But how could he see without exposing himself to view? In that, too, he was fortunate. He reached into his vest pocket to see what it was that the man who had worn this suit of clothes before had been carrying there. A small hand mirror! He placed it on the rocks in such a position that he could see clearly everything that went on below him on the ground. He reached up and turned it a little, so that the spring and everything around it was visible. Then he waited.

Two hours passed, and the sun flooded the rocks above and below him. Then a man came out of the cabin with a water pail in his right hand. At his left, a pistol protruded from a new leather holster. He seemed to be entirely at ease here.

Only fifty feet away, he stooped to fill the water pail. Now was the time to act! Joe crouched back into the cave, and watched the mirror. He was fifteen feet above the man. If he only had Helmar's pistol! But it could be done without it. Lying on his back with the mirror a few inches from his eyes, he could see everything without being seen.

"Put 'em up!" Joe spoke clearly, but his words sounded hollow and far-away, as if some one else had spoken them. Charley Helmar had been right. To do this kind of thing required experience.

BEFORE the brief sentence was finished, the water pail left the man's hands and fell to the ground. In its place was a pistol. With the weapon half pointed, the fellow stood scrutinizing the cliffs, as if uncertain where the sound came from. Joe could see every motion. The eyes were cold and calm and cruel. The fellow was not even frightened. He was only puzzled.

"Drop that gun!" Joe roared. "Drop it, or I'll shoot!"

Joe's empty hands trembled now as he moved slightly in order to get a better look into the mirror. The tall man was still standing there, with the gun half pointed. The expression of that face was uncanny. It was superbly casual, as if the fellow had been about to shoot at a squirrel.

Joe had planned logically. He had meant to say to the fellow that he had him covered, order him to disarm himself and step back fifty paces, with hands raised. After that was done, he would leap to the ground, run quickly to the spring where the weapon should have been dropped, avail himself of it, and effect an easy capture. Frightened and subdued, the man could be made to mount the black horse, and ride ahead. The pinto could outrun the black, so that escape would have been impossible. It could hardly fail, as he had planned it. But something was wrong.

Joe looked steadily into the mirror.

"You might as well be sensible about it, old fellow. Drop your gun and put up your hands."

"Why?" The quiet voice made him shiver. Cold beads of perspiration covered his face. His hands trembled.

"Because I've got you covered!" Joe called fiercely. "Drop that gun, or I'll put holes in you!"

A voice of steel came back from the spring below him.

"That would be an interesting experiment. I was just wondering if perhaps you weren't inclined to exaggerate a little at times."

Joe shuddered. "You think I lie, then?"

"Oh, I'd hardly say that. But I'm inclined to think your statement that you have me covered, is just a mistake in dates."

"I'll shoot if you move!" Joe roared desperately.

The other laughed a mirthless cackle. "That idea seems to be mutual. I was just thinking that perhaps I'd shoot if you moved. But I haven't seen you move yet."

JOE was helpless, but he realized that his only hope now was to continue with his threats.

"Do you want to die?" he roared.

"Not worried about it." Then, after a pause, "Who are you, anyway?"

"Ranger Melrose," Joe spoke firmly.

"Oh!" There was a distinct note of relief in the voice that came back. "Never heard of you. Thought at first it might be Slim Haggerty. I was rather expecting a visit from Slim. I'm glad to make your acquaintance, Ranger Melrose. But really I'm a little worried about your health. You know, the people who come to see me up in this quiet old hole always stay right here. Because I croak 'em. It's just a way I have."

Joe wanted to repeat his threat, but his voice failed to function. This fellow was so confident of his ability to shoot the second he exposed himself, and to shoot first, and to shoot accurately, that even though he believed that he faced an armed man he was utterly contemptuous.

The voice came again from the flat below, with the ease and graciousness of a man introducing himself.

"Oh—I neglected to tell you who I am. I supposed perhaps you knew already, but it seems you don't. My name is Vail—Clyde Vail. About everybody around here knows who I am."

For an instant Joe drooped in his hiding place, and his brain buzzed with a thousand quaint fantasies. Clyde Vail! Then he collected his thoughts. Nobody had heard of Clyde Vail for three years. But his name was known to every man and woman for many miles. He was an institution, and as inevitable a marauder as the first killing frosts of autumn. People spoke of the mysteriously-superhuman Clyde Vail in whispered tones, shook their heads with respectful skepticism whenever his capture was hinted at, and declared that he would live to a good old age and die a natural death. Clyde Vail had shot many times, but had never been known to

shoot and miss. Every one knew of his deeds of violence.

Joe still lay on his back, in the little crevasse fifteen feet up the ledge. He stared into the mirror. He wanted to think, but his mind refused to center upon any plausible plan. There was only one thing to do; continue to state that he was armed, and would shoot if Vail moved in his tracks. But he hesitated to repeat what he had said before. It was useless.

THE voice continued: "I hate to trouble you, Ranger Melrose, but there seems to be a small piece of glass, or something that resembles glass, just above your head. The sun is shining on it at such an angle that it reflects the light into my eyes. You'll pardon me if I take the liberty to remove it?"

As the last taunting word was completed, a pistol barked out from below him. The hand mirror disappeared. Only the gray mark of a bullet could be seen in its place.

Joe could no longer see the man who had shot with such casualness and precision. He could only lie hidden and continue to make his useless threats. He ceased to speak to the terrible being below him, and crouched like a hunted rabbit that has taken refuge in too shallow a hole. The terrifying voice of Clyde Vail came again, from another direction, this time in a faintly-chuckling tone. "Ranger Melrose, eh? Says his name's Ranger Melrose!" There was silence for a half minute. Then the voice came from a much greater distance. "Well, Ranger Melrose, I just want to show you a little trick shooting. You see that flat surface of rock, just three feet from your right elbow? It's just about the right angle, I should think. You know there's a sort of science to this glancing business. I've figured on it a lot. I hate to disturb you up there, but I'm afraid——"

He hesitated, and seemed to be listening. From far down the canyon there came the sound of iron hoofs on rocks. Horses—several of them!

The pistol barked. A bullet buzzed from the flat surface which the outlaw had designated, and it plowed a hole through a drooping coat sleeve.

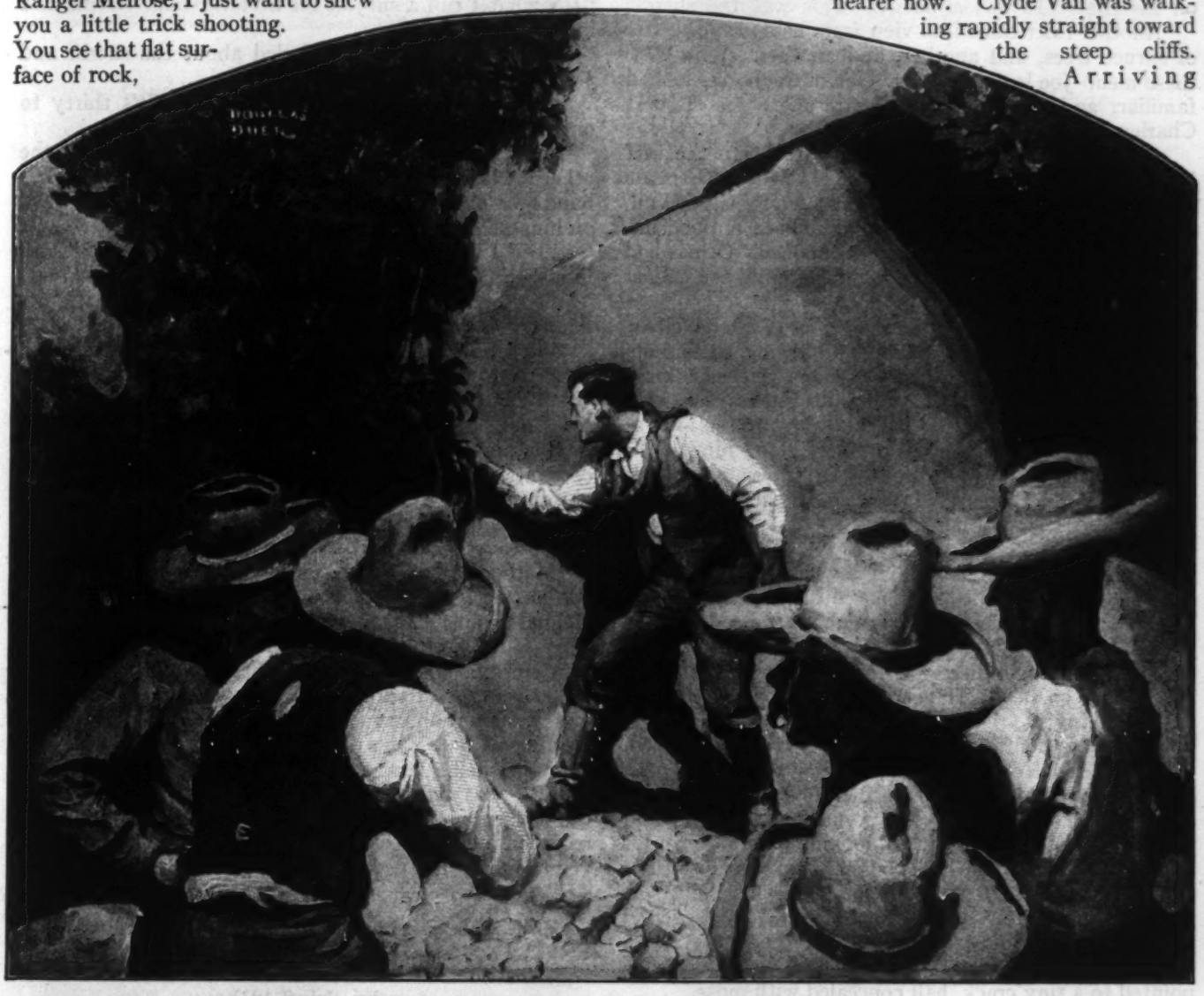
"Take that for your insolence!" Clyde Vail hissed.

Joe still lay close. He knew he was expected to open fire as soon as Vail began to shoot. That was why Vail had stepped back a hundred yards. But a return shot was denied him. What could be the meaning of the distant sound of horses' hoofs? Were they all friends of Clyde Vail?

Joe listened. Vail was talking to the horse.

"I guess that fixes him, old pony. Got him the first time, didn't I? He's dead, pinto, or he'd let me have it in the back. Well, be good, old partner, if I never see you again. Have to go hide, now. Here come fifty fools with shotguns and sledge hammers looking for me. Don't you tell 'em where I go. So long, old pony!"

THE voice ceased. Cautiously Joe peeked out. Vail seemed to be absolutely convinced that the glanced shot had done its work thoroughly, for he did not even look back. The approaching sounds were much nearer now. Clyde Vail was walking rapidly straight toward the steep cliffs. Arriving



With his hand on the slab of rock, Joe paused. "Pull her open and I'll come out," said Vail

at the bare, moss-covered rock wall, he paused a second, looked carefully about the meadow, as if to make sure he was not observed, reached out with one hand and tugged at what appeared to be a big slab of rock at the base of the cliffs. It yielded. It swung open. It had hinges!

With one more cautious glance about him, Clyde Vail disappeared into the black cavity, and the slab of rock swung back into its former position. From a distance, the surface of the rock looked as natural and mossy as before. For some time Joe watched the exact spot, in order to fix it definitely in his mind.

JOE still waited. It seemed like hours since he had scrambled up the ledge and taken his position there. He was surprised to find that it was still early morning. The pinto and the black, feeding quietly in the meadow, raised their heads suddenly and pointed their ears at a brisk-gaited strawberry roan, emerging from behind a cluster of spruce trees. Joe half rose from his crouching position. He had seen that horse before. It was the horse ridden by the man who had fired at him last night. The rider was a sinewy little man, with an air of brisk decision in every motion.

At the center of the meadow, he halted, dismounted, pulled the reins over the horse's head and left them dragging. Then he walked lamely for a few steps, up and down, like a man who had been long hours in the saddle. Joe still hesitated to show himself. This was the man who had fired at him last night. Something sparkled on his coat. It was a badge. This was the sheriff!

Another rider came into view from behind the cluster of spruce trees, and another, and another. Who were these men? Joe looked closely. One of the horses looked familiar, and the rider looked still more so. It was Charley Helmar.

Quickly Joe scrambled down the rocks to the turf beneath. He knew now what had happened. Because of the horse he rode, he had been mistaken for Clyde Vail, at Gibson. The sheriff had no doubt been notified immediately, and Helmar had been summoned. Others had volunteered. It was this sheriff who had fired at him last night, mistaking him for Vail.

Almost at once Joe was in the center of a large circle, answering questions at random, and trying to find opportunity to divulge the information which he knew would bring silence and caution and even fear to every one present. Helmar, who had been first to see him, at length took hold of his arm and conducted him to the wiry little man who wore the badge.

"This is Mr. Haggerty, Joe. Slim Haggerty, they call him. He's a friend of mine."

JOE hastened to relate briefly what had happened, while the sheriff listened nervously and the others crowded around. Then he set out ahead, to lead the way to the secret door.

"It's right over here. I think I can find it."

"Better go slow," Haggerty warned. "Chances are he's watching us, right now."

But Joe continued and thirty others followed, Haggerty and Helmar foremost among them. At first, there appeared to be no entrance at all. The face of the rocks at the foot of the cliffs seemed undisturbed and natural. Joe stood bewildered, looking up and down for the exact spot where the man had pulled open a mysterious door and entered. There was not a mark of any sort to identify the place. Finally he murmured to Haggerty:

"It's almost the exact spot, as I remember it. I lined it up with that little tree, and—oh, here it is!" He pointed to a tiny crack, half concealed with moss.

"Good!" Haggerty muttered, and stepped out ahead of the others, leaving a dozen feet between himself and the rocks. Then he spoke to the man he knew was behind the stone door.

"Will you come peaceable, or do we fight?" he inquired.

From inside the cave, there came a brazen chuckle.

"I'd hardly call it a fight; but I dare say there may be a little pistol practice. In fact, I've got you covered right now—all of you."

Joe saw Haggerty look back, as if with a trace of indecision. Then he spoke with an effort at calmness.

"Come out, Vail. It's thirty to one again' you."

"Thirty what?" The voice was contemptuous.

"Thirty men," Haggerty retorted.

From within the rock there came a sneering laugh.

"Thirty men, eh? Better go back and get a hundred more; make it even." Then, after a pause: "Well, come on with your thirty men—or whatever you call 'em. I'll tell you beforehand, though, I've got 'em covered."

JOE saw the sheriff waver. Something must be done before the courage of this little group melted under the subtly blasting influence of Vail's threat. In the hush that followed, Joe spoke the words that were uppermost in his thoughts.

"It's a lie!" he shouted.

"A what?" Vail bantered, pleasantly.

"A mistake in dates," Joe corrected.

"Maybe you're right, and maybe I am," Vail taunted. "It's what I call a subject for investigation. Come and investigate it!"

Then the little group, circled about the sheriff and Joe, began to speak all at once.

"Call him, Haggerty—call his bluff! It's thirty to one. Thirty men, too."

Joe led the way, and the sheriff, followed by all the others, with pistols drawn, was close at his side. His hand was on the slab of rock, which would swing back on hinges. Again a voice came from within.

"Did I hear somebody mention Mr. Haggerty?" Vail inquired quietly.

"I think you did," the sheriff affirmed. "That's my name."

With his hand on the slab of rock, Joe paused until the reply came back. It came with quiet, casual stoicism.

"I guess you've got me, Slim. Pull her open, and I'll come out."

Joe himself swung open the door. It was a shallow excavation, having been made apparently without the aid of suitable drills. Clyde Vail stepped out into the half circle of pistols, all pointed toward him. His eyes were steady. His head was erect. He was silent.

Methodically he raised his hands in token of surrender. Joe hastened to snatch the pistol, while Haggerty and Helmar rummaged through the pockets for other weapons. They found nothing. The pockets of that olive uniform were empty. Joe noticed for the first time that there were no shells in the cartridge belt. All eyes were turned upon him in astonishment as he threw open the barrel and examined Clyde Vail's only weapon. In the cylinder was only one shell. It was an empty!

Late that night Joe Melrose opened his diary and read the last entry. Post holes and barbed wire! Then he recorded the doings of the past three days on a brand-new yellow page. His account of it was as follows:

Wed., July 7, 1922
Miscellaneous executive duties.

Thurs., July 8, 1922
Miscellaneous executive duties.

Fri., July 9, 1922
Miscellaneous executive duties.

Bouchard suddenly jumped from his chair. "That woman has my platinum watch!" he hissed. "I want it!"

Cherchez La Femme

The Secret Service Goes Through the Underworld on a Thrilling Hunt for Glittering Diamonds and Desperate Men

By Major C. E. Russell

Author of "The Woman Spy of Biarritz," etc.

Illustrations by Lejaren Hiller

IT was an early June morning in Bordeaux, and the Rue D'Intendance was all but deserted as the jeweler Bouchard unlocked the door of his prosperous-looking shop and jauntily stepped inside.

A moment later the same Bouchard, hair disheveled and hands gesticulating hysterically, rushed through the open door into the street.

"Ruined! I'm ruined!" His shrill, falsetto shrieks echoed down the deserted thoroughfare. As if in answer, shutters opened and there quickly appeared, from nowhere, a motley crowd of sleepy, but wide-eyed neighbors.

Bouchard stood before his shop wringing his hands and wailing: "I've been robbed! Ruined! Call the gendarmes! The gendarmes!"

An urchin darted from the crowd and sped along the Rue D'Intendance to the nearest police station. There, between gasps, he told the story of Bouchard, the jeweler. Then through the swelling crowd about the door of the jewelry shop the local police chief with his men pushed their way.

Within they found chaos and destruction. In one corner of the shop stood an old-fashioned safe, battered, its creaky door gaping wide, its contents scattered in confusion about the floor. Show cases, cupboards and drawers, likewise, were torn open.

Still gesticulating wildly, Bouchard followed on the heels of the gendarmes. He ran to the looted safe, and for the second time that morning thrust his hand deep into a secret compartment where his most precious diamonds had been stored. It was empty.

Ignoring the jeweler's wailings, the chief stepped quickly across the room to an open, shattered window that gave mute testimony of the manner in which the intruders had made their entrance and escape. He looked out, searching the shadowed alley below; and there, huddled in a recess between two walls, he saw the silent form of a gendarme, bound and gagged!

And so began a thrilling hunt for glittering diamonds and desperate men that led first through the underworld of Bordeaux, then to a woman's apartment, and finally to a deadly gun battle for the possession of a deserted shack on the side of a hill.

My first information of the Bouchard robbery came over the telephone from my friend, the Chief of the French Secret Service.

This is one of a series of articles by Major Russell on actual A. E. F. Secret Service Exploits in France

"Major, it looks to me like a professional job," he said, after he had related the circumstances briefly.

And when I visited the scene in answer to his summons, I agreed with him. There was not a trace of a clew—only twisted window bars, shattered glass, a piece of joist leaning against the wall of the alley. And our efforts to obtain information from Bouchard were unavailing. He could think only of his lost diamonds.

Next we turned our attention to the unfortunate gendarme who by this time had been released from his bonds and had returned to the police station.

"It happened while I was patrolling my beat last night," he told us. "Just as I arrived at the entrance to the alley that runs behind Bouchard's store I was startled by the sound of breaking glass. As I looked down the alley I saw two dark forms drop down from the window and disappear into the darkness. Drawing my revolver, I started after them. I supposed they would run. Instead, they must have crawled forward to meet me; for as I passed an angle in the wall one of them felled me with a blow on the head. When I came to, I was alone and securely bound. For hours I tried to free myself, but they had done their work too well. That's all I know."

"Were they wearing uniforms?" I inquired.

"No, they wore civilian clothes—that much I did see," he replied.

This answer told me that the robbers must have been Frenchmen, not American soldiers; therefore, I was relieved of the responsibility of hunting them. I returned to my office.

One Night Over the Lines

By Major Tom Vigors

THE most thrilling exploits of the World War have never been told. The adventures of the airmen who fought in the blackness over the front during night-bombing raids or while engaged in strange Secret Service expeditions were so amazing as to seem incredible.

The censorship and the flyers' oath of secrecy kept these fascinating exploits from the public. But now the facts can be told.

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE will begin publishing next month a series of stories by an officer of the British Royal Air Force revealing actual incidents of the war in the air that surpass in excitement anything of the kind hitherto made public.

Watch for "ONE NIGHT OVER THE LINES," the first of Major Vigors' absorbing articles.

THE WOMAN IN "SPANISH TOWN"

BUT my detachment from the affair was destined to be short-lived. A few days later, when the Bouchard robbery had passed from my mind, the French chief appeared at my office with the jeweler in tow.

"Major, it looks as if it's your case, after all," said the chief. "Bouchard has been thinking it over. He recalls now that a few days before the robbery two Americans, dressed in civilian clothes, entered his store. One asked to see a platinum wrist watch and some diamonds. Bouchard opened the safe to show them. While he was thus engaged the second man roamed about the store, finally halting near the open safe. He stood there studying it for a few moments. After much haggling, the men refused to buy and left the store in an angry mood, vowing vengeance for what they termed an attempt to exploit them because they were Americans. I believe these two are the men we are looking for."

"What did they look like?" I asked Bouchard. "Would you recognize them if you should see them again?"

"One was rather tall and well-built, while the other was somewhat shorter and thin," mumbled the jeweler. "No, I don't think I would know them if I saw them again."

Not much of a description to follow in running down two criminals! I despaired of gaining any information of value from Bouchard, and immediately cast about for some definite clew to work on. First I called upon the French chief to place a watch on the pawnshops; then on my old ally Levy, "the king of the underworld," to learn, if possible, whether any women of the demimonde had appeared recently wearing new jewelry.

Their search was without results. It was apparent that the crooks were too clever to dispose of their loot through the pawnshops, while Levy confided that not a piece of the stolen jewelry had shown up in his district. A check at American training camps near by revealed that of five men who were reported absent from their quarters on the night of the robbery, each had an ironclad alibi.

As a last resort, I turned to "Spanish Town," the least desirable of the two divisions of the Bordeaux underworld. Spanish Town—separated from Levy's district by the business section of the city—was closely guarded by military police to prevent any Americans from entering. Although it was difficult to see how any of our men could possibly enter in uniform, I detailed a Secret Service man, Sergeant Baxter, to cover the section. Dressed as a rough sailor, he visited the few cafés that were allowed to remain open.

"There is one woman in the district—a frequenter of the *Café Royale*—who appears to have several new pieces of jewelry," he reported. "Her name is Josephine. Another woman told me that she was proudly sporting a new platinum watch and a diamond ring."

"Can you get Josephine to talk?" I asked eagerly.

"I'll try," Baxter promised.

Night after night he haunted the café, and finally succeeded in striking up an acquaintance with Josephine, but he was unable even to discover where she lived. She was willing enough to meet him in the café, but beyond its doors she remained a mystery.

After one disappointing attempt to follow her home from the café, Sergeant Baxter called on me for aid. "She knows me and is wise to me when I start to shadow her," he said.

JOSEPHINE IS SHADOWED

I DETERMINED to go to the café myself and attempt to shadow the woman. That night I set out on my quest, dressed in an old suit of clothes and a worn-out cap. My hands were stained and grimy from immersion in oil drawn from the crank case of my motor car. Lieutenant Murphy, our doctor, had skillfully painted a black eye on my face.

Entering the café in the rôle of a sailor just off a ship, I sat down at a table opposite Baxter, and waited. Josephine arrived at last. For hours, it seemed to me, she and Baxter sat there drinking abominable wine which I, too, was compelled to drink to keep from being thrown

out of the place. And when, finally, she made a movement to go, Baxter diverted her attention while I slipped out of the door ahead of her. In a shadowed doorway on the deserted street I waited until she started on her homeward journey.

Then I followed her, sometimes slinking into doorways or corners when she turned around, sometimes flattening myself against walls of friendly houses. Once, after she had turned a corner, she suddenly wheeled about and retraced her steps. I had barely time enough to throw myself into a gutter before she was looking back along the way she had come. But my efforts were rewarded at last when I saw her enter her home, letting herself in with a latchkey.

Having located the woman, the next move was to find out who her callers were. In this the Chief of the French Secret Service aided me by placing in the house one of his woman operatives named Clovis.

It was not long before Clovis reported to me that an American—not a soldier—was visiting Josephine three nights a week. This American soon was identified by Baxter as a civilian working for contractors on the Bassens dock extension. His name was Robert Anderson. Although the friendly relations between this man and the Spanish Town woman who had just come into the possession of new jewelry strengthened our belief that we had located at least one of the criminals, we did not attempt to arrest him at once, for we were anxious to locate his confederate, and also to recover the missing diamonds. Evidently the gems had been carefully hidden.

Our first endeavor was to make sure that the jewelry worn by Josephine was part of the loot from Bouchard's store. Bouchard himself was so certain that he would recognize his property, if given the opportunity, that I arranged to have him visit the café with me, risking the chance that Josephine might know who he was, although such a recognition would mean exposure of our plans.

Painstakingly, I instructed the excitable jeweler as to how he should act.

"We shall secure a table where you will be able to observe the woman and the jewelry," I told him. "When you are sure of your identification, let me know. We shall leave quietly before she becomes suspicious. But be very careful of your actions, for the woman will be

"I saw two dark forms in the alley," said the gendarme, "and I started after them, thinking they would run. Instead, they turned suddenly upon me"

sure to warn others, if her suspicions are aroused."

Soon after Bouchard and I had seated ourselves at a table near the door of the café, Baxter sauntered in and chose a table near ours. He was opening his first bottle of wine when Josephine arrived. She stood in the doorway leisurely surveying the crowd, in search of a familiar face; then, spying Baxter, she slipped into a chair at his table. Thus far our plans had progressed favorably.

Bouchard Identifies His Property

HARDLY had the woman finished greeting Baxter when Bouchard suddenly jumped from his chair, after one glance at her wrist.

"Where are you going?" I asked, puzzled by his sudden move.

"That woman has my platinum watch!" he hissed. "I want it!"

"Sit down, you fool, and keep quiet! Do you want to spoil it all?" I demanded, seizing his arm.

"I want my property!" he insisted, fighting to free himself.

I glanced quickly toward Josephine. It seemed to me as if she must have heard, yet it was apparent that she was paying little or no attention to us.

So far, then, we were safe. But there was no telling how far my excited Frenchman might go. I must act quickly. Already others in the café had heard the quarrel and were craning their necks to see what the scuffle was about. This was no time for argument; there was only one way to settle it.

My fist shot out and struck Bouchard squarely on the point of the chin. He dropped forward on the table. The blow resulted as I had hoped. The waiters, accustomed to such scenes, quickly surrounded us and hustled us out into the street.

Still dazed from my blow, Bouchard, of course, was frantic with anger when he realized who had struck him. He turned to reënter the café for the avowed purpose of tearing his watch from the woman's wrist. I strode after him to intercept him. His attitude called for threats of still more vigorous action before I could induce him to accompany me to the French Headquarters. His identification of the wrist watch had been dramatic enough to convince the most sceptical that we were on the right track.

With the watch identified, our next move was to find out whether Anderson had purchased it—as he was sure to claim if we arrested him—or whether he was guilty of the robbery. That could be determined only by placing a close shadow on him. Baxter was assigned to this task. I arranged with the superintendent to put him to work as Anderson's assistant. Since Anderson was a structural iron worker, this meant working on the skeleton of the new warehouse, climbing up and down ladders after tools or swinging aloft on steel girders.

Anderson Becomes Suspicious

FOR a time there were no new developments. But at last Baxter learned that Anderson had a pal by the name of Fleming. On the nights that Anderson did not go to the city, the two always were together. But whenever Anderson visited Josephine, Fleming, instead of joining his mates in the usual camp activities, occupied his time by taking long walks. Following him on these jaunts, Baxter was surprised to discover that he always visited an old, tumble-down house on a hill back of the camp. Fleming would disappear inside the shack for a few moments; then, reappearing, he would return directly to the camp.

What was the reason for these mysterious nocturnal visits? We determined to see for ourselves what within those dingy walls was of such interest to Fleming. Our search met with failure. While we could detect Fleming's footprints inside, the place apparently was empty.

Not long afterward it became evident to us that Anderson was growing suspicious of Baxter's rôle. On one occasion he sent Baxter down to the ground to bring up a bar. Just as Baxter stooped to pick it up, a wrench that Anderson was using whizzed by Baxter's head and buried itself deep in the ground!

"I'm sorry, old man!" apologized Anderson, though his look belied his words. "The thing slipped from my hand."

Baxter was uncertain whether the dropping of the wrench was an accident, as Anderson claimed, or a deliberate attempt on his life; at any rate, he determined to keep a close watch for a similar occurrence. For days he watched, all the while feeling that Anderson's eyes followed his every move.

The second attempt was made one day when the two men were on the roof fitting a girder in place. Baxter was at one end; Anderson at the other. Baxter glanced up in time to see Anderson deliberately push his end out with his foot. That one glance saved his life. As the heavy girder slid forward to knock Baxter from the beam on which he was standing, he met the oncoming menace by throwing himself toward it and grabbing it with both arms, and so rode to safety. If he had missed, he would have plunged downward to sure death, forty-five feet below. There was no doubt of Anderson's malice now.

The Crooks Plan a Getaway

AS he lay in his bunk the next night, Baxter saw Anderson motion to Fleming to meet him outside. When they had disappeared, the sergeant quietly walked out of the door to shadow the pair. The two men sauntered aimlessly along and finally climbed a hill back of the camp, while Baxter followed. Choosing a spot where they could observe any one who might approach along the path, they seated themselves upon a rock. Baxter dodged into a vineyard bordering the path and wormed his way around until he was directly behind them. Then he dropped down upon his stomach and stealthily crawled through the grass until he was within hearing distance. It was a dangerous move; Baxter knew that discovery might mean instant death; yet he knew, too, that here was the opportunity he had been awaiting.

"I tell you, Jim," Baxter overheard Anderson growl, "that man's a 'dick,' and he's wise to us. Twice I've tried to pump him off, but both times he's had the devil's own luck and escaped. I wish I had him here right now!" Just then the cold shivers played up and down Baxter's spine. "He's getting on my nerves, that's all! We're suspected and we want to make our getaway before they nab us. Day after tomorrow's pay day. As soon as we get our money we'll beat it to the old house, dig up the swag and then jump over into Spain. The sparklers are worth thousands of dollars. We can live like two kings there. No one can touch us."

"You're right, Bob," agreed Fleming. "We'll get away the same night we get our pay."

They sat there on the rock, building air castles, planning the life they would lead, once they were safe across the border, until heavy drops of rain interrupted their dreams of gold. Unaware of the net that was drawing closer about them, the two arose, stumbled down the path in the gathering storm and hurried into the camp.

But not so Baxter. Drenched from the shower, but

jubilant because at last he had conclusive proof of the guilt of the pair, he hurried to my room.

"We can get them sure, major!" he cried.

"Of course we can," I answered. "Somewhere in that deserted house these two have hidden the loot. You return to the camp, Baxter. When you see them start off after receiving their pay, telephone me. I'll have the motor car, with plenty of military police in it, ready and waiting here at my office. Just as soon as I hear from you, we'll start for the house. We can catch them red-handed with the loot on them. In the meantime, take good care of yourself. Don't let them get you in a pocket."

At last the night for action came. My motor car was waiting outside my office. Seated in it were three of my best men—all scrappers. Four of us were sufficient to handle the two crooks, I was sure, since we expected to have the element of surprise on our side.

"They have just left," was the laconic message that Baxter flashed over the telephone from the camp.

Strapping on my automatic, I jumped into the car.

"Let's go!" I ordered. And off we started.

We planned to leave the car some little distance from the shack—the noise of the exhaust might give warning before we arrived. Turning into a side road, the car halted. The four of us got out, looked to our revolvers and started across the field to stalk our quarry.

We hoped to catch the two robbers digging up the treasure. Crouching low in skirmish formation, we were slowly closing in on the house when one of them, stepping to the door, saw us.

A flash, a report, a bullet whining by our heads told us that, instead of surprising them, they had the "drop" on us.

We fell on our faces while we waited for their next move. We didn't wait long. Another flash, and the dirt was kicked up about ten feet in front of my face. Well, two could play at that game! My automatic cracked and a forty-five bullet sang its way through the open door and flattened itself against the opposite wall. We had them cornered, but the problem was to get them out without any of my men being killed or wounded.

Slowly I rolled along the ground, hugging it as close as I could until I reached the man nearest to me.

"Crawl back to the car," I whispered. "Then drive to the cavalry camp at Bassens. Tell the captain what we are up against. Have him rush ten men armed with rifles and plenty of ammunition."

Once she nearly caught me shadowing her when, after rounding a corner, she stopped and came back

Quietly the men rolled away in the darkness, while I prepared to place the house under siege.

"You, Bill," I whispered again, "move over until you can cover the rear of the house. If you see them trying to escape, shoot, but aim high; we don't want to kill them except as a last resort. The lieutenant and I will watch the front and the other side."

And the siege was on.

Every little while a revolver would bark, and a shadow in the house would disappear. Then, when all seemed quiet, a shot from within would warn us that we were dealing with desperate men. It seemed ages to us before the noise of a motor car was heard and the captain of the cavalry came crawling up to the line.

"Where are they?" he whispered.

"In that old shack," I whispered back. "We must wait until morning; then if they don't surrender, we'll blow up the whole place. Have your men surround the house."

The hours of darkness dragged on, punctured now and then by shots from the besiegers and the besieged. But with the first break of dawn the desperadoes, looking from their fortress, realized that they could not hope to drive off the small army surrounding them.

A white handkerchief waved aloft on a stick was their token of surrender.

"Come out with your hands up," I ordered, "or we fire!"

Out they marched, hands stretched high.

"Where's the stuff you stole?" I demanded, after we had searched them.

"Back there on the floor," said Fleming.

We trooped in. The two thieves had been dividing the loot when they saw us coming. Not satisfied, from what Bouchard had told me, that it was all there, I ordered the robbers searched again. Around Anderson's waist we found a money belt. Inside of it were the missing diamonds.

"So you were holding out on me, were you?" Fleming demanded angrily. "You couldn't play fair even with your pal, could you? You crook!"

Fleming confessed. Our evidence was complete. Josephine, while she denied all knowledge of the robbery, was willing to surrender the jewelry that Anderson had given her.

At the court-martial both men pleaded guilty and were sent to Fort Leavenworth for ten years.

Recently, in a Cleveland newspaper, I read that Anderson had been arrested in Boston, Massachusetts, charged with having escaped from the military prison at Fort Leavenworth. A slippery chap was Anderson!

Jim Maitland's Adventure at Corn Reef Light

The Queen Goddess of the Island Calls for Human Sacrifice

By Major H. C. McNeile

Illustrations by G. W. Gage

IF you lie on the close-clipped turf that stretches between Beachy Head and Burling Gap, not too far from the edge of the white chalk cliffs, you will see below you the lighthouse. It stands out in the sea some two hundred yards from the base of the cliff, and every few seconds, with monotonous regularity, once dusk has fallen, the beam from the revolving light will shine on you and then pass on, sweeping over the gray water below. A dangerous part of the coast, that one-time haunt of smugglers, till the lighthouse made it safe. There are treacherous currents and shoals, and when a southwesterly gale has been blowing full force for some days it can be rough off Beachy Head.

But the worst is when the sea wrack comes gently drifting over the Downs and lies like a great gray blanket over the sea below. Then that sweeping light is useless, and every two or three minutes comes the sound of a maroon from the lighthouse—a sound which is answered by the mournful wailing of sirens out to sea, as vessels creep slowly through the fog. Like great monsters out of the depths they wail dismally at one another and pass unseen, their sirens growing fainter and fainter in the distance. Only the roar of the maroons from the lighthouse goes on unchanged, while the gray fog eddies gently by, making fantastic figures as it drifts. Implacable and silent, it seems to mock such paltry man-made efforts to fight it, and yet there are amazingly few accidents, even in that crowded shipping area.

It depends, however, for its success upon the man. Elaborate your mechanical devices as you will, introduce the most complicated automatic machinery to control the regular sweep of the light, and the monotonous explosion of the maroons, it all comes back finally to the man who lives in that tall slender building rising out of the water. A dreary life to which not many men are suited: a life where strange thoughts and fancies might come drifting into one's brain—drifting as gently and slowly as the gray wisps of fog outside. And after a while some might remain, even though outside the fog has gone and the water shines blue again in the sunlight. It is that way that danger lies. In the crowded waterways, where inspectors are many and inspections numerous, the risk is small.

BUT there are others where from month's end to month's end a man will see no soul save the fellow who lives with him; where, save for the occasional visit of a boat with supplies, there is nothing to break the deadly monotony. Sometimes even there is no other fellow: the man is alone. And strange things may happen if then those drifting thoughts and fancies come and take root. When faces float past pressing for a moment against the glass, and then are gone; when voices unheard by the other man come clearly out of the night: when strange shapes materialize—there is danger ahead.

Which is by way of being a preamble to one of the strangest of the adventures which came to Jim Maitland and me, during the years we wandered together. It was in the spring after the fight at Bull Mine Creek, and the memory of Pete Cornish had well-nigh faded from our minds. We were drifting homeward, though neither of us admitted it in so many words, but we were drifting in our own way. Not for Jim the conventional P. and O.; his taste, as always, was for the small coasting boat which called at unknown islands and dealt in strange cargoes. One went as far as one liked in her, and then stopped and waited for something else. Which takes time, but has its advantages undreamed of by the occupants of the millionaire suites in big liners.

And so it happened that one day in the spring following our efforts at finding gold we came back to Tampico—that island where I had first met him—that island which held the grave of the husband of the only woman who mattered to Jim. We took rooms in the hotel, and almost as if the words had been spoken aloud I heard again her voice, bitter with unmeasured contempt, crying, "Oh, you cur!" I think Jim heard it, too, for suddenly he smiled at me a little bitterly.

"Is it much use going home, Dick?"

HE didn't wait for my answer, but turned away with a shrug of his shoulders and went upstairs while I strolled down the street toward the club. Nothing had changed: nothing ever will change at Tampico. Each drunken derelict who dies is replaced sooner or later by another, which can hardly be accounted as change. And as for the club, I might have left it the day before instead of three years previously.

It was unoccupied save for one man who glanced up as I came in, and then continued reading the letter he held in his hand. Every now and then he gave a little frown, and I looked at him covertly as I ordered a drink. There was that nameless something about him which marked him instantly as one of those thousands of Britishers who spend their lives in God-forsaken quarters of the globe, carrying on the little job of Empire.

The native waiter brought me my drink, and with a three-month-old illustrated paper in my hand, I sat down and forgot about him. He did not seem disposed for conversation, and, to tell the truth, no more was I. The clubhouse at Tampico was the starting point of many memories and I was feeling lazy Chiefly they centered around Jim, and it wasn't until I heard his voice behind me cheerfully greeting the stranger that I realized I was holding the paper upside down.

"Why, it's MacGregor!" I heard him say. "The

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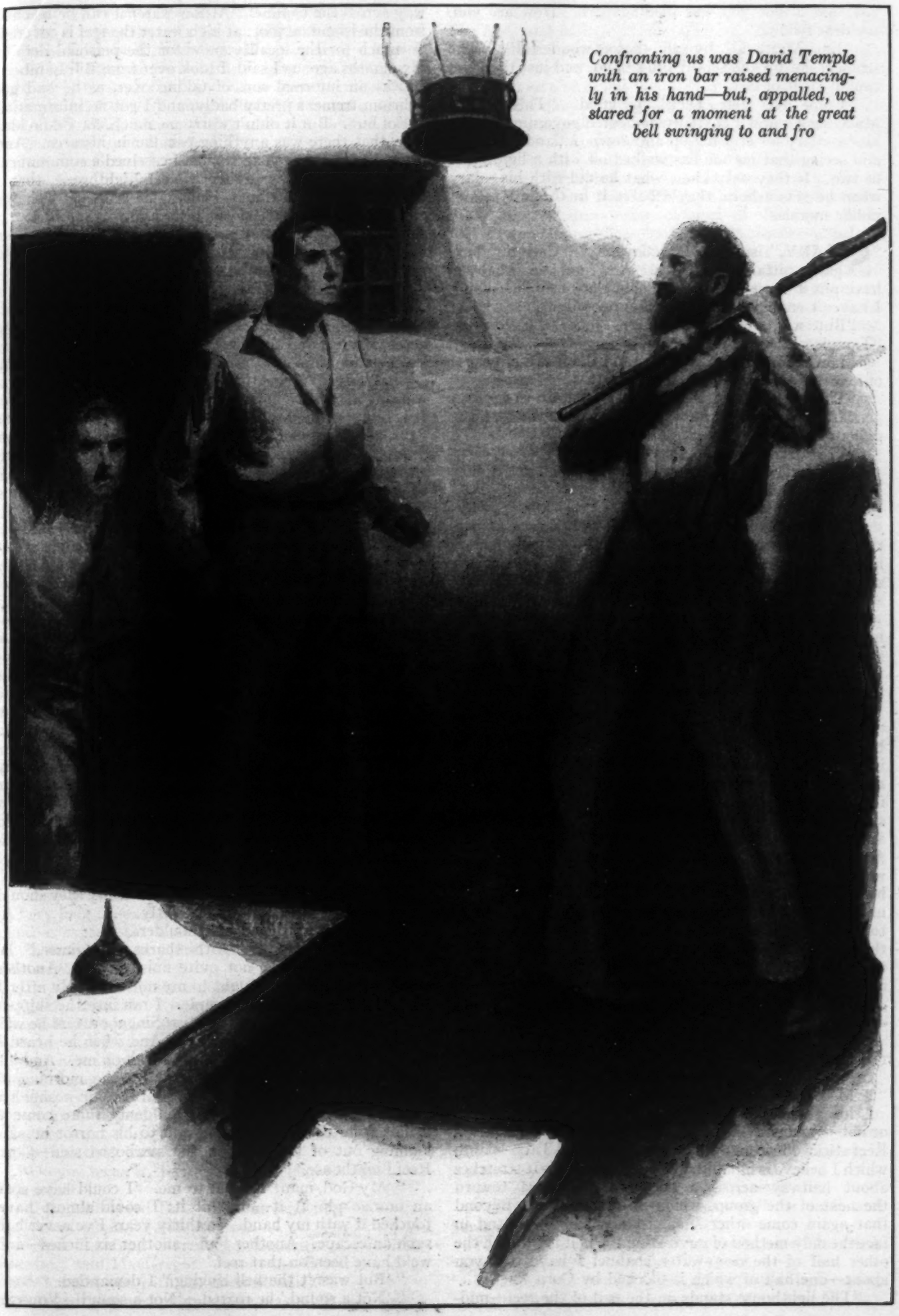


Confronting us was David Temple with an iron bar raised menacingly in his hand—but, appalled, we stared for a moment at the great bell swinging to and fro

last time I saw you was in Singapore. How are you, my dear fellow?"

"Jim Maitland, by all that's wonderful!" The stranger got up and seized Jim's hand, and just then Jim caught sight of me.

"Come over here, Dick!" he cried. "This is Jack MacGregor—and a partially demented government pays him a salary for cruising up and down outlandish waters and seeing that no one has walked off with a lighthouse or two. If they only knew what he did with his salary when he gets ashore, they'd halve it in the interests of public morals."

"SALARY," snorted MacGregor. "Call my beggarly pittance a salary! And now the blighters have put a survey job on my shoulders as well. Think I haven't enough work to do, I suppose."

"But what brings you here, Jock?" asked Jim. "Tampico is a bit out of your beaten track, isn't it?"

MacGregor nodded abruptly and the frown appeared once more.

"The supply boat for the lighthouse at Corn Reef goes from here," he said. "It starts tomorrow and I'm going with it."

"Visit of inspection?" said Jim.

"Yes and no," returned the other. "In all probability I shall stay there for a week or so."

Jim raised his eyebrows.

"Since when has the great Pooh Bah stayed at particular lighthouses?" he inquired. "I thought you merely looked in to see that the occupant hadn't been frying sausages on the lamps, and then passed gracefully on."

Jock MacGregor grinned, and then grew serious again.

"That's why I said yes and no. This isn't an ordinary inspection." He hesitated a moment and then leaned forward in his chair. "Care to hear the story, Jim?"

"Get it right off your chest, Jock," said Jim, beckoning the waiter for drinks.

"Well, if it won't bore you I will," began MacGregor. "Only I'll have to go back a bit. When we last met, I had nothing to do with this area at all. Bill Lambert had it, and mine was farther north. I don't know if you ever met Bill, but he took to seeing things that weren't there, from the usual cause, and has recently gone on permanent sick leave. They said they'd send a successor, as they always do say, but so far there's been no sign of him. And until his arrival Mr. MacGregor was to carry on with both areas—and no increase of pay. Bless their hearts! However, I didn't mind, and, to do them justice, under normal circumstances it would have made no odds to me. If you've twice the area to cover, you do half the number of inspections, and it comes to the same thing in the end. It's just a matter of form and routine as you can guess—*under normal circumstances*."

He emphasized the last three words, and Jim glanced at him.

"One gathers that Corn Reef is not quite normal," he remarked.

"I'M coming to that," said MacGregor, putting down his glass. "I don't know whether you know the part or not—personally, I only know it from the map. Corn Reef sticks out from a smallish island called Taba Island, which I believe is inhabited by a few natives. It stretches about halfway across a deep-water channel toward the next of the group, which is uninhabited. Beyond that again come other small islands and reefs, and in fact the only method of navigating the belt is through the other half of the deep-water channel I have told you about—one half of which is blocked by Corn Reef.

"The lighthouse stands on the end of the reef—midway across the channel. At low water it can be reached from the island on foot: at high water the reef is covered. So much for the locality: now for the personal details. Six months ago, as I said, I took over from Bill Lambert. It was an informal sort of taking over, as he had got delirium tremens pretty badly, and I got no information out of him. But it didn't worry me much, for I'd no idea then that there was anything peculiar in his area. And it wasn't till a month ago, when I received a communication from the keeper at Corn Reef Lighthouse, that I began to look into things. His name is David Temple, and the communication was brief and to the point. It stated that his assistant had fallen into the sea and been drowned, while attending to the bell, and could another be sent!"

"Bell!" repeated Jim. "I don't quite follow."

"Sorry," said MacGregor. "I forgot that point. Apparently, at certain times you get a thick belt of fog across the reef and the channel and stretching right along the belt of islands. Probably it's some form of heavy ground mist. When that comes down they have as a warning for ships a huge bell which is tolled mechanically. It is built out on a sort of platform below the level of the light, and as far as I can make out from the plans it seems a pretty antiquated sort of arrangement. However, there it is, and as long as it functions you won't get them to spend any money in having it replaced by anything more up-to-date.

"Well, when I got Temple's letter, I began looking up the files. And to my amazement I found that about three months before Bill Lambert had gone, a precisely similar letter had reached *him*. At first I thought that the second was merely a reminder, and that Bill had forgotten all about it. So I made inquiries, only to discover the somewhat sinister fact that it was far from a reminder. Bill *had* sent a man. I was therefore confronted with the situation that within some nine months two men had fallen into the sea and been drowned, while attending to the bell at Corn Reef Lighthouse. Which seemed to show that there was something radically wrong with the bell arrangements generally: something"—MacGregor paused—"something, Jim, which I utterly failed to get at from the plans. I'm not denying that the whole idea is antiquated, but, granting that the plans and sections are correct, it is perfectly safe. And I could see no reason whatever—short of a desire to commit suicide—why two men should fall into the sea."

"AND even granting that, why of necessity they should be drowned?" said Jim quietly.

MacGregor shrugged his shoulders.

"The place is alive with sharks, of course," he remarked. "But I've not quite finished yet. Another unpleasant fact was brought to my notice shortly after I received this letter from Temple. I ran into the skipper of some craft or other in the club at Singapore and he was looking for Bill Lambert's blood. And when he heard I was doing Bill's job he turned his wrath on me. And his accusation amounted to this: that on the morning of February 24th he was on the bridge of his ship nosing her gently through a thick mist. Suddenly there came a bellow from the lookout man, and to his horror he saw looming out of the mist on the starboard side—Corn Reef Lighthouse.

" 'My God, man!' he said to me. 'I could have spat an orange pip at it—and hit it: I could almost have touched it with my hand. In thirty years I've never had such an escape. Another foot—another six inches—and we'd have been on that reef.'

" 'But wasn't the bell ringing?' I demanded.

" 'Not a sound,' he roared. 'Not a sound! You can

hear that bell for fifteen miles—and there wasn't a sound. Only as I passed by—damn it, why the platform on which the bell is built nearly grazed my wireless—I looked up. Man! I tell you the bell was ringing right enough—I could see it through the fog—but no sound came. Only above the beat of the engine, I thought I heard a steady thud, thud, thud, in time with the beat of the bell. But maybe it was my imagination.'"

Jock MacGregor paused and drained his drink.

"So that is the rather peculiar situation I'm up against."

"And how do you propose to deal with it?" asked Jim.

"TEMPLE asked for an assistant," said MacGregor briefly, "and he's going to have one. He's going to have me." He lit a cigarette and leaned back in his chair. "There's something wrong, Jim," he continued, after a moment, "something very wrong out there. That merchant skipper was as hard-headed a customer as you could meet, and if he saw that bell moving—it was moving! Then why was there no sound? And those two men drowned in nine months! I guess I'm not going to send a third till I've had a look around myself. This man, David Temple, doesn't know me—hasn't ever seen me, so there won't be any difficulty in passing myself off as his new assistant."

Jim was looking thoughtfully out of the window.

"How long has Temple been there?" he said at length.

"Years, as far as I can make out," answered MacGregor. "There was one paper in the file—the usual routine paper with regard to an exchange—dated five years ago. He'd refused, or rather had requested to be allowed to stay on. And since I gather there is no vast rush for Corn Reef, I suppose Bill Lambert was only too glad to let him." He paused and looked at Jim.

Jim shook his head.

"Five years is a long time, Jock," he said gravely. "A very long time. It's far too long a time for a man to spend in a place like that."

"You think I may find Temple a bit queer?" said MacGregor slowly.

Jim shrugged his shoulders.

"Jock," he said, "I've got a proposal to make to you. Temple doesn't know you and he doesn't know me. You go as his assistant, as you have already decided: I'll go as your new boss who has just taken Lambert's place. Dick can come as a pal of mine. If everything seems all right—well, we shall all have had a very pleasant little trip, and Temple will be none the worse. If, on the other hand, things are not all right—three heads are better than one, Jock."

"Do you mean it, Jim?" said MacGregor. "Will you both come?"

"I do," answered Jim. "And as for Dick——"

"Count me in," I said at once.

"Then I accept your suggestion with the greatest pleasure," said MacGregor. "And, to tell you the strict truth, I might add with the greatest relief."

At dawn the next morning we started in the supply boat, and of the run to Taba Island I shall say nothing The first part of it was uninteresting, and the last few miles were so inconceivably beautiful as to defy description. In front of us stretched the belt of islands, with the lighthouse standing up, dim and clear-cut, straight ahead. On our left lay Taba Island, a riot of tropical vegetation and glorious flowers which reached right down to the water's edge, broken here and there by stretches of golden sand almost dazzling in its brightness.

Between the lighthouse and the island was a line of surf marking Corn Reef; while to the right of the lighthouse lay the deep-water channel of unbroken blue. And as we got nearer we could see the strange structure which marked the position of the bell. It was built out from the side, and it reminded one of those medieval galleries which jut out from the walls of old castles into which the defenders used to go to pour burning oil on the gentlemen below. And this bell jutted out in just such a manner on the channel side of the lighthouse.

"Great Scott!" said Jim, who had been examining it through his field glass. "Even allowing for pictorial effect, if that fellow passed close enough to see that bell in a fog, I don't wonder he wanted somebody's blood."

And now we were near enough to see the details with the naked eye. On a rough landing stage at the foot of the lighthouse a man was standing gazing at us fixedly through a telescope. As we came closer he shut it up and awaited us with folded arms. He was dressed in white, and as the boat made fast he might have been carved out of stone, so motionless did he stand. Then he took a step forward, and spoke in a curiously harsh voice.

"Which is my new assistant?"

He was tall and gaunt with a coarse, straggling beard, and as I looked at him I could conceive no more awful fate than being condemned to spend month after month alone with him.

It was Jim who answered, as we had arranged.

"Here is your new assistant—MacGregor," he said, stepping ashore. "And I am your new inspector, in place of Mr. Lambert."

"You will find everything in good order, sir," the man said quietly, but it was Jock MacGregor he was staring at.

"How comes it that two men have been drowned within such short time, Temple?" demanded Jim sternly. "There must have been gross carelessness somewhere."

"IT is the bell, sir," answered the man, still in the same quiet voice. "When the mist comes down, and presses around one's head with soft, clammy fingers, it is sometimes difficult to see."

Jim grunted, and eyed the man narrowly.

"Then the bell must be removed," he said, and Temple started violently.

"It is only carelessness, sir, on their parts!" he cried. "The bell has never hurt me."

"Well, I will inspect everything," said Jim curtly. "I shall stay here until the supply boat returns the day

Pirates and Radio

BOUND for Colombo across a placid sea, the ship bore a few passengers, a cargo of gold, seven missionaries with "a crate of Bibles"—and Jim Maitland.

The chief missionary manifested a mysteriously childlike interest in communicating by wireless with a friend on a steam yacht cruising the same waters.

And thereby hangs another Jim Maitland yarn—the most fascinating so far published in the series by Major H. C. McNeile which has been running in McCLURE'S for six months, and will continue throughout the year.

"The Seven Missionaries" is just one of half a dozen *unusual* stories to be published in McCLURE'S for October.

after tomorrow." He looked up at the lighthouse.

I saw Temple shoot a quick suspicious glance at him, but he merely nodded and said, "Very good, sir." Then he glanced toward Taba Island and nodded again, as if satisfied.

"There will be fog tonight, sir," he remarked. "When the Queen of the Island is crowned in mist at this time of day there is always fog. So you will hear the bell."

He went off to superintend the disposal of his stores, and Jim turned to MacGregor.

"What the devil is he talking about, Jock?" he muttered.

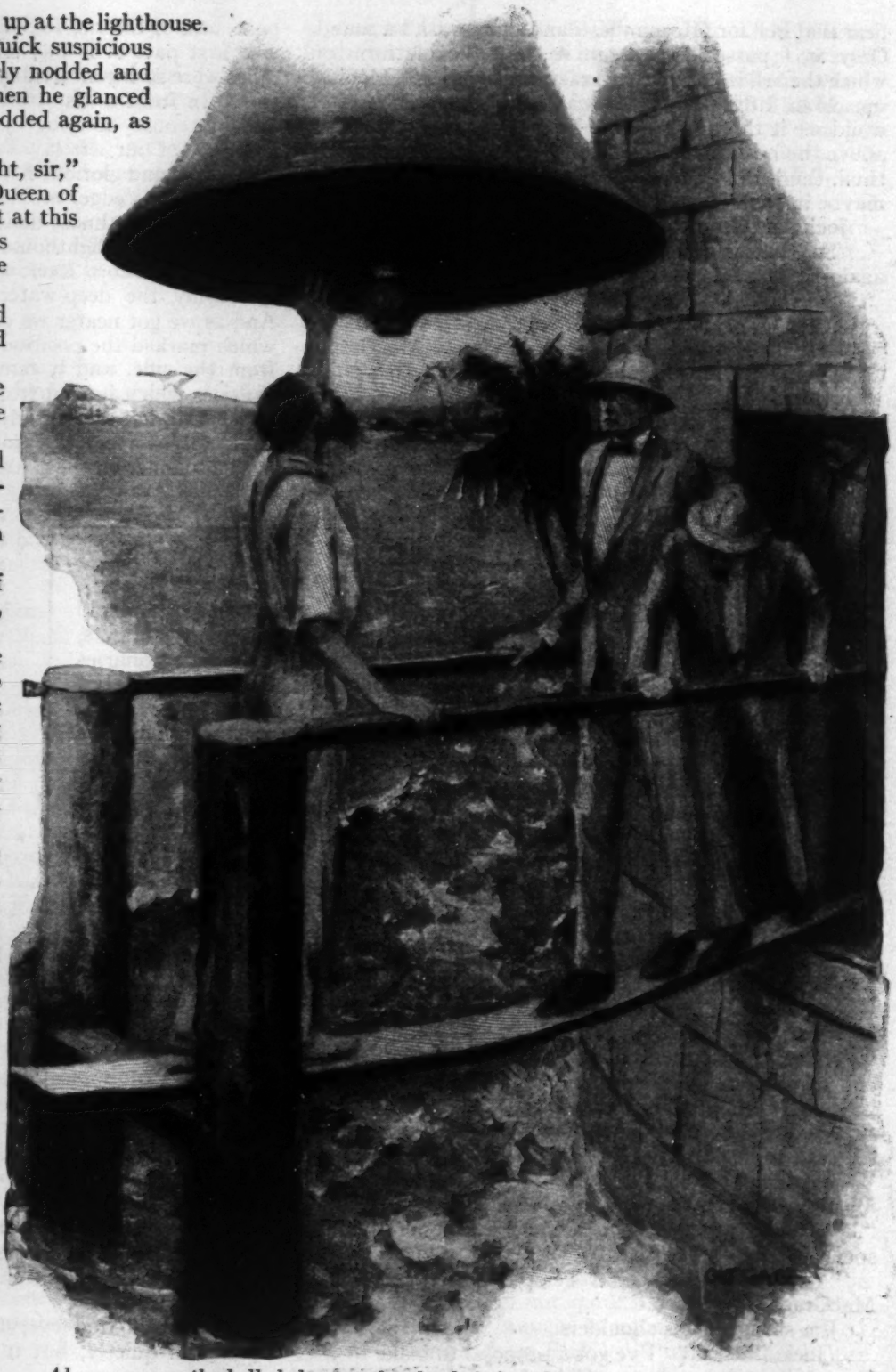
"The Queen of the Island is that hill, old man," answered MacGregor. "I remember seeing it marked on the map."

"He seems a queer sort of bird," said Jim thoughtfully, and MacGregor nodded.

"You're right, Jim," he said. "Though I'm bound to admit that at present he doesn't strike me as anything out of the way. You meet some queer, morose customers on this game, you know."

And certainly, during the next hour or so, there seemed nothing peculiar about Temple. Jim, carefully primed by MacGregor, asked a few leading questions, but for the most part he said nothing and let the other man talk. We examined the mirrors and reflectors: we examined the lamps: but most of all we examined Temple himself. And then we came to the bell.

If it had looked big as we came toward the lighthouse, it looked enormous close at hand. Built out from the side, it was carried on a steel cantilever arm, while underneath it, about eight feet below, a narrow wooden platform jutted out over the water—a platform some eighteen inches wide. It was but little more than a single plank ten feet long, and as one walked out on it, though the railing on each side made it perfectly safe, it gave one almost a feeling of dizziness. Above one's head the bell with its monotonous clapper; below one's feet the water: and poised between the two the narrow platform—all too narrow for my liking.



Above us was the bell; below us the shark-infested water; and poised between the two the narrow platform—all too narrow for my liking

"Now, was it from here that the two men fell?" demanded Jim, still in his rôle of inspector.

"Yes, sir," said Temple quietly. "Though I did not see it happen myself. I was inside attending to the mechanism that works the bell."

"And did you make no effort to save them?"

For answer, Temple peered over the side for a moment or two—then he pointed downward without a word. And while I looked I counted three evil shapes slide by in the clear blue depths.

"And when did the last man fall over?" went on Jim. "On what date?"

"On February 24th, sir," said Temple and MacGregor caught his breath. "In the early morning when the fog was thick. It is entered in my log book."

"Was the bell ringing at the time?" demanded Jim sharply.

"The bell always rings when there is a fog, sir," answered Temple, and Jim glanced at MacGregor, who shook his head imperceptibly. "Would you care to

hear it now, and see how it works?" he asked quickly.

"Yes," said Jim, "I would."

"There is a heavy weight inside, sir," said Temple, "inside the lighthouse, I mean, which works the bell by means of cogged wheels. On the principle, sir, of the weights in a grandfather's clock." His tone was that of a man who is patiently explaining something to a child. "If you will come inside, I will start it."

We followed him in, and he pressed down a lever. Almost at once the bell began to oscillate, slightly at first, but gradually and steadily increasing in swing, until at length the first deep note rang out as it struck the flapper. The notes came deeper and more resonant, though irregularly, for a time, till at last both clapper and bell settled down to a rhythmic swing. Like a huge pendulum the clapper passed backward and forward over the platform outside, while the bell swung down to meet it first on one side and then on the other. And the deep, booming note ringing out every two or three seconds seemed to fill the whole universe with one vast volume of sound. It deadened one's brain: it stunned one: it made one gasp for breath.

SUDDENLY I felt Jim grip my arm. Speech was impossible, but I followed the direction of his eyes. He was looking at David Temple, and so was Jock MacGregor. For the lighthouse keeper was staring at the Queen of the Island with blazing eyes. His hands were locked together, and he was muttering something for we could see his lips moving, while the sweat glistened on his forehead. He seemed to have forgotten our existence, and when Jim touched him on the shoulder he swung round with a hideous snarl.

"Stop the bell!" shouted Jim, and the snarl vanished. He was the disciplined subordinate again, though in his eyes there was a look of sly cunning.

He pressed another lever, and after what seemed an interminable time the bell gradually ceased. Not at once, for it went on swinging under its own momentum for a while, but at length the noise died away: beat after beat was missed till at last it swung in silence, save for a faint creaking.

"Is that satisfactory, sir?" asked Temple quietly. "Because I would like to stow away my stores as soon as possible. Afterward I will go through my log with you."

Jim nodded. "All right, Temple. Go and attend to your stores."

The man went out, and we stared at one another thoughtfully.

"February 24th," said MacGregor. "Did you note that, Jim?"

"I noted it right enough," answered Jim. "Jock, the man's queer. Did you note his face while that infernal bell was ringing, and he was staring at the mountain yonder?"

MacGregor had strolled over to the window himself, and suddenly he beckoned to us with his hand.

"Come here," he muttered. "Look at him now."

BELOW, on the landing stage, knelt David Temple with his arms flung out toward the mist-crowned mountain. For half a minute he stayed there motionless; then he rose and came inside the lighthouse.

"He's worse than queer," said MacGregor. "He's mad."

And now I come to the final chapter, and the thing that happened when the mist came down on Corn Reef. Jim and I had spent the night—I cannot say we had slept very much—in the room normally used by the assistant, while Jock MacGregor had stopped in the other room to take his turn with the lamp. At the faintest sign of trouble he was to call us, and to make doubly sure, Jim and I had taken turns sleeping while the other remained awake. There was no good in letting Temple see that we suspected anything, since no steps could be taken till the return of the supply boat. Then Jock MacGregor had decided that Temple was to go back in it while he remained in the lighthouse till a relief was sent.

During the evening Temple had been quiet and perfectly rational, though I had caught him once or twice eying MacGregor with a curiously furtive expression. He had lit the light and explained the simple mechanism quite normally, and then had stood with us while we watched the beam sweep around the black water below. It was a glorious night such as can only be seen in the tropics, without a trace of fog, and for a time our suspicions were lulled. It seemed impossible that anything could happen in such an atmosphere of peace and beauty. Only once did a stray remark of Temple's bring back our doubts, and then it was due more to our previous suspicions than to the remark itself.

"The Queen is angry tonight," he said, staring at the island. "She demands a sacrifice."

"What do you mean by such rot, Temple?" said Jim sternly.

"When she veils her head, sir," he answered quietly, "her subjects must appease her. Otherwise she will be revenged."

He left the room with a word of apology, and we heard him going downstairs.

"Native superstition," grunted MacGregor.

"Perhaps," said Jim. "But once native superstition gets hold of a white man, Jock, it's the devil."

AND that is all that had happened before we turned in: little enough to prepare us for the thing that was to happen. It must have been about three o'clock when Jim roused me, and prepared to take my place on the bed. And as we were changing around we heard a ship's siren wail in the distance. And then we heard it a second time. For a moment or two it made no impression on our minds, and then the same thought struck us both simultaneously.

We dashed to the window and looked out—looked out into a thick mist that drifted slowly past, blotting out everything. No water could be seen, no star—just dense, clammy vapor. The fog had come down on Corn Reef, and the bell which had deafened us only that afternoon was silent.

Once again the siren wailed mournfully, and then as we listened we heard a steady creaking such as the bell had made as it had gradually come to rest the day before. And every now and then a strange, dull, thudding noise—creak, thud: creak, thud.

Jim sprang to the door, and turned the handle; but the door refused to budge. We had been locked in, and outside Jock MacGregor was alone with a madman. And, even as we realized it, there came through the open window a faint shout of "Help!"

It took six shots to shatter that bolt, and by the mercy of Heaven there wasn't a second. And then we dashed up the short flight of stairs into the room above—to halt somewhat abruptly as we entered. For confronting us was David Temple, with an iron bar in his hands, and his face was the face of a maniac. But it wasn't at him we were looking—it was beyond him to the place where the platform stretched out into the mist. For the door was open, and we could see the great bell swinging to and fro. But it was at the clapper we were staring, fascinated. For lashed loosely to the end of it and clinging to it desperately was Jock MacGregor.

"The Queen demands a sacrifice!" roared the mad-

man. "Two she has had, and now she requires a third. Stand back!"

There was no time for half measures. MacGregor's voice, breathless and gasping, came to us faintly: "For God's sake, hurry!" And out of the mist, much louder and nearer, wailed the siren.

So Jim shot the poor devil through each arm, and the crowbar crashed to the floor. Even then he tried to stop us till a blow on the point of the jaw put him to sleep. And then it became a desperate race against time. Outside the siren was going continuously, seeming almost on top of us, while standing on the platform we tried to catch MacGregor as he swung past us. But the bell was heavy and it seemed an age before we could check the clapper sufficiently to cut him down. And every moment we expected to hear the dreadful grinding crunch of a ship striking rock. But at last we had him down, and Jim darted to the lever to restart the bell.

The first deep boom rang out, and in the silence that followed before the swing became regular we heard a sudden agonized shout, and the thrashing of a propeller. Then the bell tolled again, and then again. All outside sound was obliterated: only the bell swung on, crashing out its message of warning. And so three sweating men sat and waited for the mist to lift off Corn Reef, while in a corner David Temple, sometime lighthouse keeper, smiled happily to himself, nodding his head in time with the bell. He had put a drug in Jock MacGregor's coffee, we discovered, and the next thing MacGregor knew was when he found himself swinging violently through space.

How even a madman had had the strength to lift a full-grown man and lash him to the clapper was a mystery to us until we discovered some rough steps of the housemaid variety, and even with them the strength required was prodigious. But he'd done it right enough, and for ten minutes MacGregor had swung backward and forward, dazed and half-stunned, while the madman had crouched below him.

At seven o'clock the mist lifted, and we stopped that accursed bell. Out to sea lay a steamer, and a boat was being lowered. Through glasses we saw an officer get in, and then the boat was pulled to the lighthouse.

I have met angry men in my life, but for sheer speechless fury the skipper of the good ship *Floriana*—one thousand five hundred tons and of mixed cargo—wins in a canter. I don't blame him: when the first clang of the bell rang out he was almost on the reef.

We told him the story and Temple smiled placidly in his corner. And after a while, when he grunted his amazement, he apologized handsomely. He went out to look at the bell, and for a while we stood on the platform. And then that skipper leaned forward, peering at the inside of the bell. In silence he pointed to two dull stains—stains we had not noticed. They were just where the clapper hit the bell—one on each side, and they were a rusty red.

I looked down into the blue water. Three more evil shapes were there—shapes which glided by and disappeared. And then I looked at Taba Island. Clear and beautiful in the morning sun the Queen of the Island rose to the sky. Her crown had disappeared.

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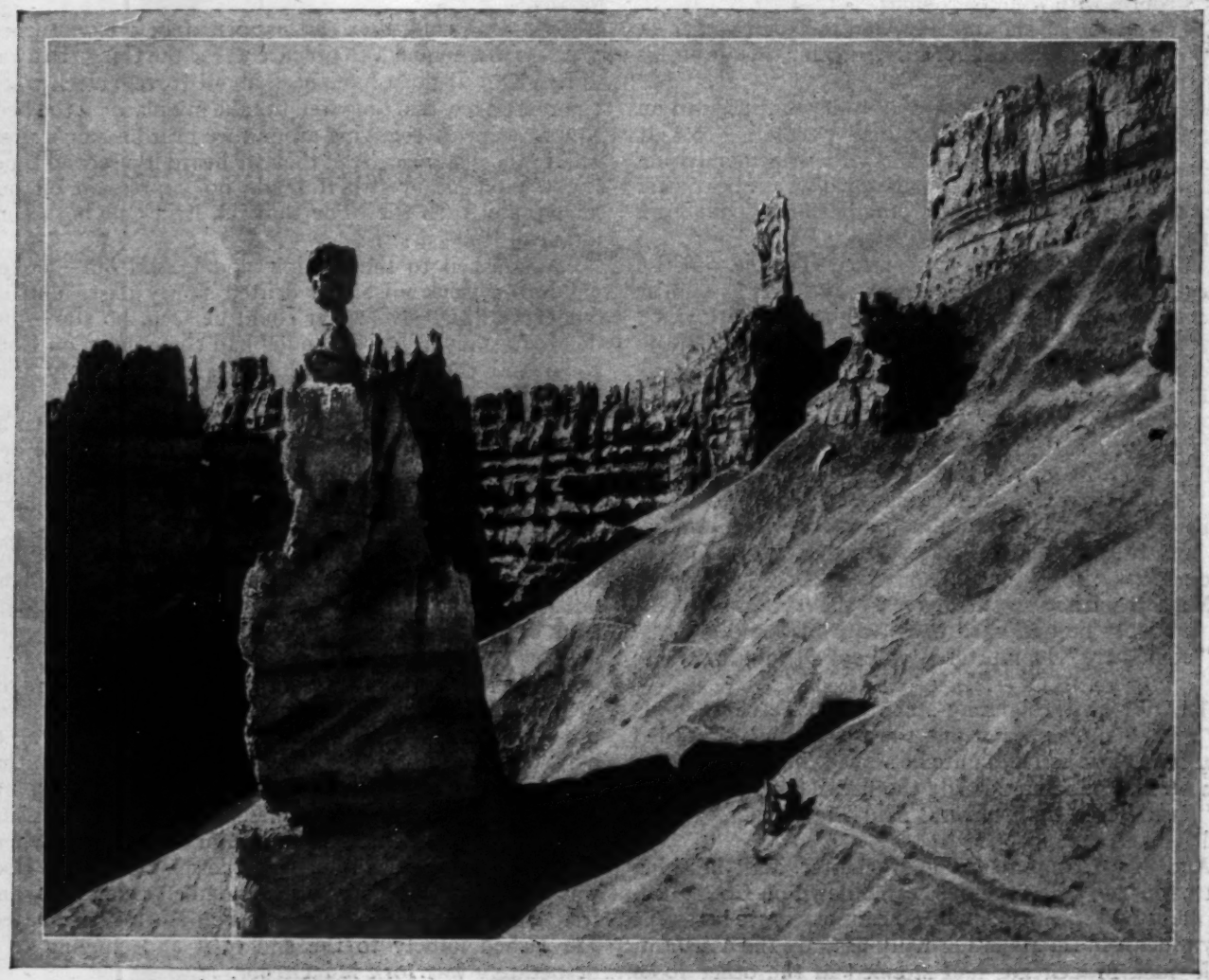
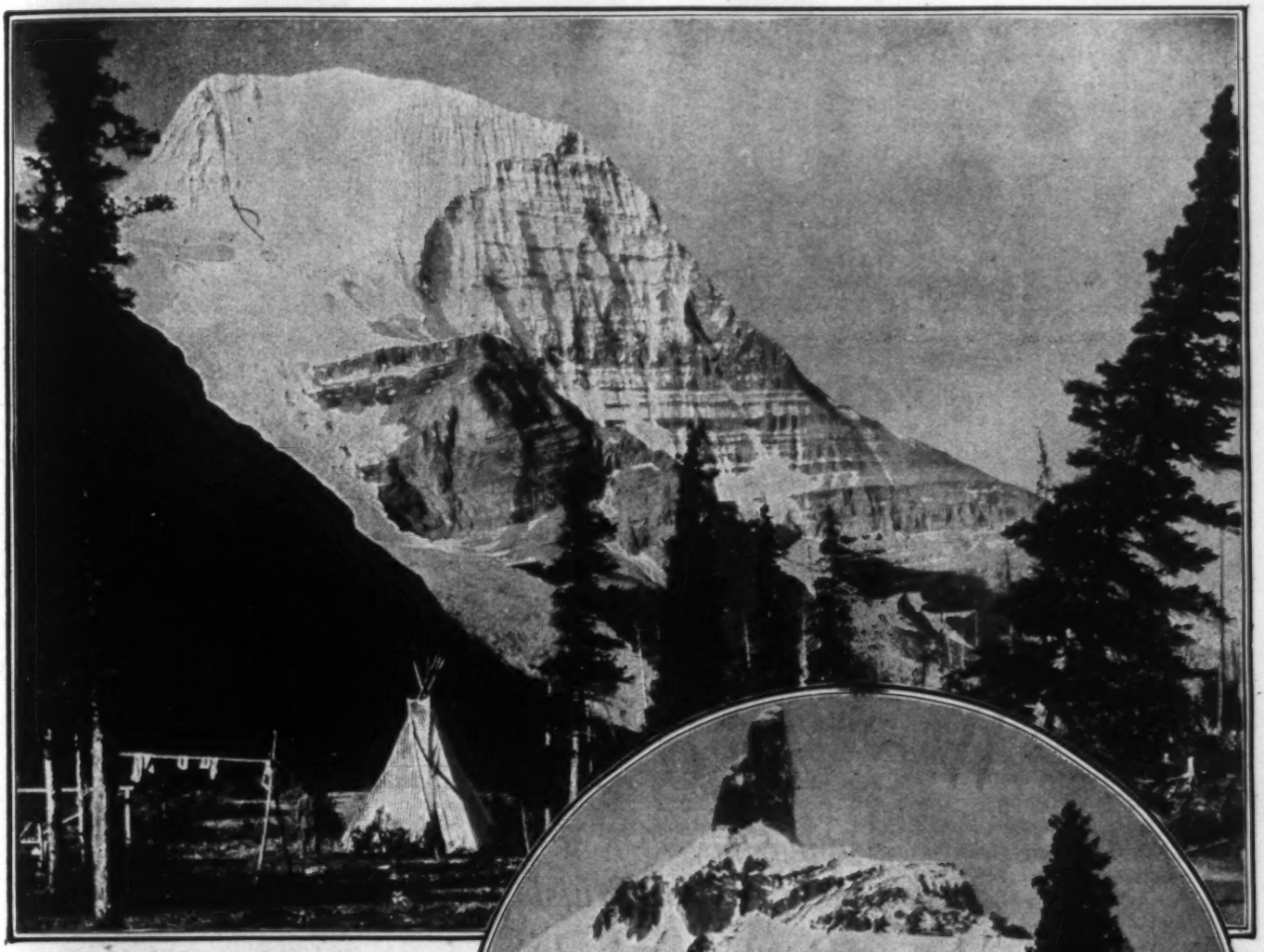
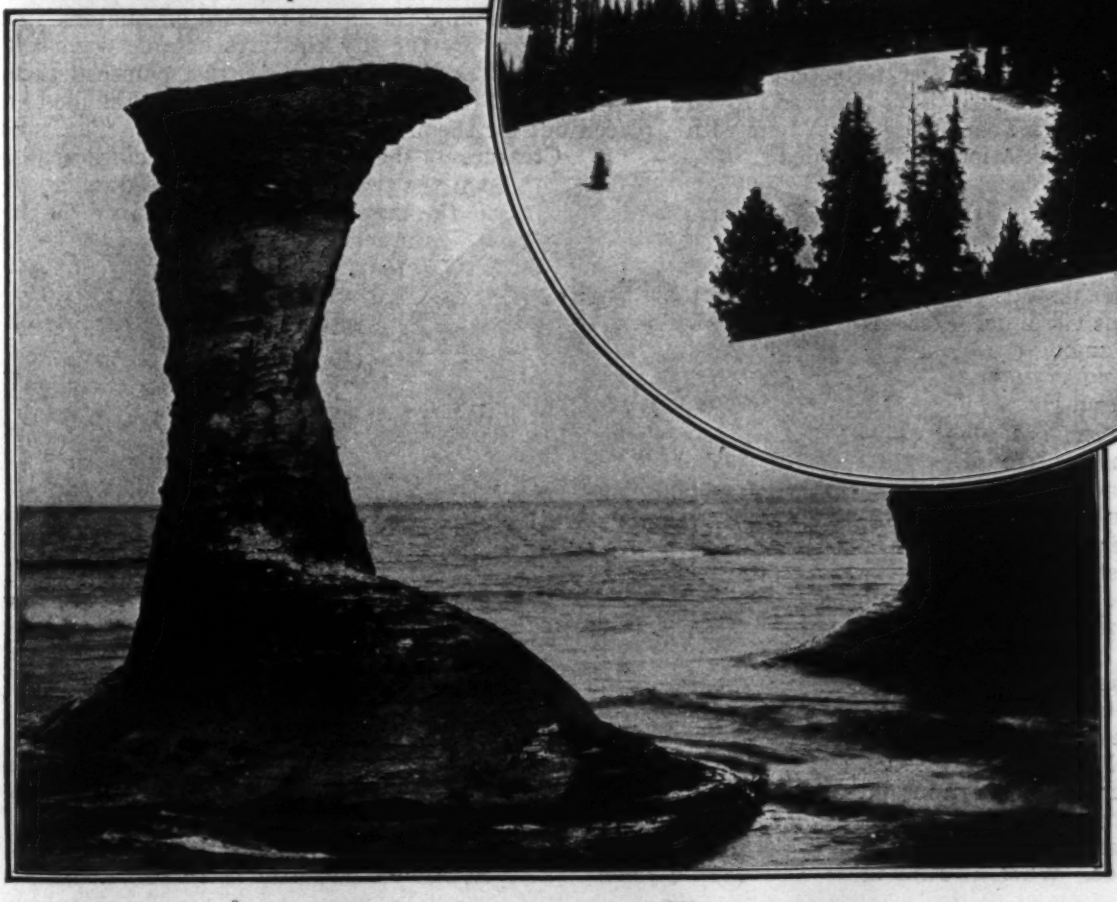


One of the lofty and fantastic monoliths in Bryce Canyon, Utah, captures an artist's fancy



Above, Mount Robson, most majestic peak in the Canadian Rockies, lures summer campers



Above, one of the tall unscaled peaks of the Rockies—Lizard Head in the San Miguel Mountains, over 13,000 feet high. At left, a scenic oddity of the Nova Scotia coast—fantastic rock pillar, sculptured by the tides of Cape Breton

© Francis Dickie

Each deer has a separate dish and their table manners are perfect. No pushing or scrambling here!

"We Are Kindred"

An Almost Unbelievable Story of a Wild Animal Island Sanctuary Off the Coast of British Columbia

By Francis Dickie

WE are kindred of the wild things. They will love us if we let them. Shyest bird, fiercest carnivorous beast, most timid vegetarian animal will in time come to accept man's presence, will become his friends. This has been proven over and over again by rare souls who are in tune with the wild. In Ontario, Jack Miner has succeeded in gaining the trust and love of countless wild geese and ducks. Starting a decade ago with a few which came to rest on the two ponds of his farm, he now has yearly thousands of these migrating birds visit him, for his first friends among the ducks and geese *told others about him*. For the thousands of geese and ducks which now come yearly to Miner's place prove that birds and beasts convey information to one another. Another example is the subject of this story—an almost unbelievable one—of a wonderful wild-animal sanctuary that exists on Hardy Island off the coast of British Columbia, a sanctuary hitherto unknown to the great outside world.

On this privately owned island—a tiny rocky dot, covered with cedar, fir and alder—dwells a colony of wild-tame deer and a wonderful man who has been their guardian for a decade. When he came to the island he found a few wild deer which he protected, diligently patrolling the shores to ward off hunters. As the days went by the shy creatures became cognizant of his friendly presence. Growing trust banished their timidity, until they came to accept by night the food he placed out for them.

You can hardly move around the island without stumbling over a fawn

Creatures of the wild are above all things occult. Soon the deer came about the dwelling of the man by day. To tell in detail of the remarkable things which marked the first years of his dwelling on Hardy Island while he slowly and with infinite patience convinced the deer of his good intentions would require a large-sized book.

In the case of the wild geese and ducks which Jack Miner befriended, it cannot be doubted that "the first visitors told others about the place." For, from a few visitors the number soon rose to a thousand birds at a time. In similar manner, the deer in the neighborhood of Hardy Island "talked about" their friend. This is shown by the increase in the number of deer which soon began coming to the island, from Nelson Island, which in one place is only a stone's throw distant, and also from the mainland via Nelson—a swim of three miles.

© Francis Dickie

A deer begging for an extra tidbit of raw oatmeal—and getting it

The deer on the mainland and on Nelson Island are extensively hunted in the shooting season—and out of it. That they have now for several years come to recognize Hardy Island as a sanctuary is beyond dispute, for the island is full of them during that period. They also breed there.

In the course of a season, many hundreds of deer visit the sanctuary, staying for varying lengths of time. In addition, there are about fifty "home-guards" — old settlers who look upon the place as theirs. These remain and, in the words of the guardian, "run the island." They clutter up his front yard by the dozens, they sleep on his doorstep. You can hardly move around the back of the house without stumbling over a fawn or two.

They gather in the old orchard and eat wind-fallen apples. Some of the real old timers, quite without training, will pick the guardian's pocket for dainties, though they really are not hungry for there is a great guest table in the open for all the beautiful, shy, wild creatures that care to come and partake of its bounty.

TO take care of "rush" times at this restaurant in the woods, there are side tables to accommodate extra visitors when the main banqueting board is crowded. Each deer has a separate dish, and their table manners are perfect: no pushing or scrambling here, no grabbing for the other fellow's portion, but a quiet, orderly array of wild creatures that in ordinary times would dash madly away from the sight or scent of man. These tables are not for the old settlers only. Many wild deer, visiting the island for the first time, come to feed, made brave by the information imparted by another visitor.

Though the guest tables are bountifully spread, this does not prevent some of the deer from begging extras. With their horns or their heads, they butt on the door or rattle the knob with their teeth, and are rewarded with tidbits of raw oatmeal or bits of apple. Yet at the sight of a stranger most of them will vanish into the forest. Their trust rests only in one man, though a few of the old settler deer will accept a stranger's company, even be friendly, if the guardian is around to stand sponsor.

But it has taken years even for this man, so sympathetic with the wild things and learned in their ways, to establish such cordial relations. Even now, certain of his wild guests are sufficiently impolite as to show some doubt of him. There is one old doe, now seven years of age, which in the spring and summer is forever hanging around the house. Yet when the shooting season draws near she disappears with the little band of followers which have gathered about her and is seen no more until the following February.

There is an interesting anecdote which brings further proof that a means of communicating ideas exists among animals. A very large buck came to the island during a recent summer, and remained for a year. No one but the guardian ever saw him, for he came only at night and if he smelt a stranger he would vanish. But every night, this buck knocked on the door. And the guardian never failed to feed him. The buck had doubtless heard from others of his kind about the man, and had come to partake of his hospitality!

Throughout the year deer surround the guardian's home, feeding at his guest tables. Yet these shy creatures are straight from the heart of the wild, and to the wild most of them in time return.

Unbelievable, you say? Well, look at the pictures, and if you still do not believe, go to the Island, yourself, and you will see far stranger things than I have been able to set down in the limited space here allotted me.

© Francis Dickie

One of the "home-guard"—the old settlers who look upon the place as their own. In the words of the guardian, they "run the island"

The Towers of Yaghistan

A Romantic Adventure in the "Land Outside," Where There is No Law Save That of Bullet and Knife

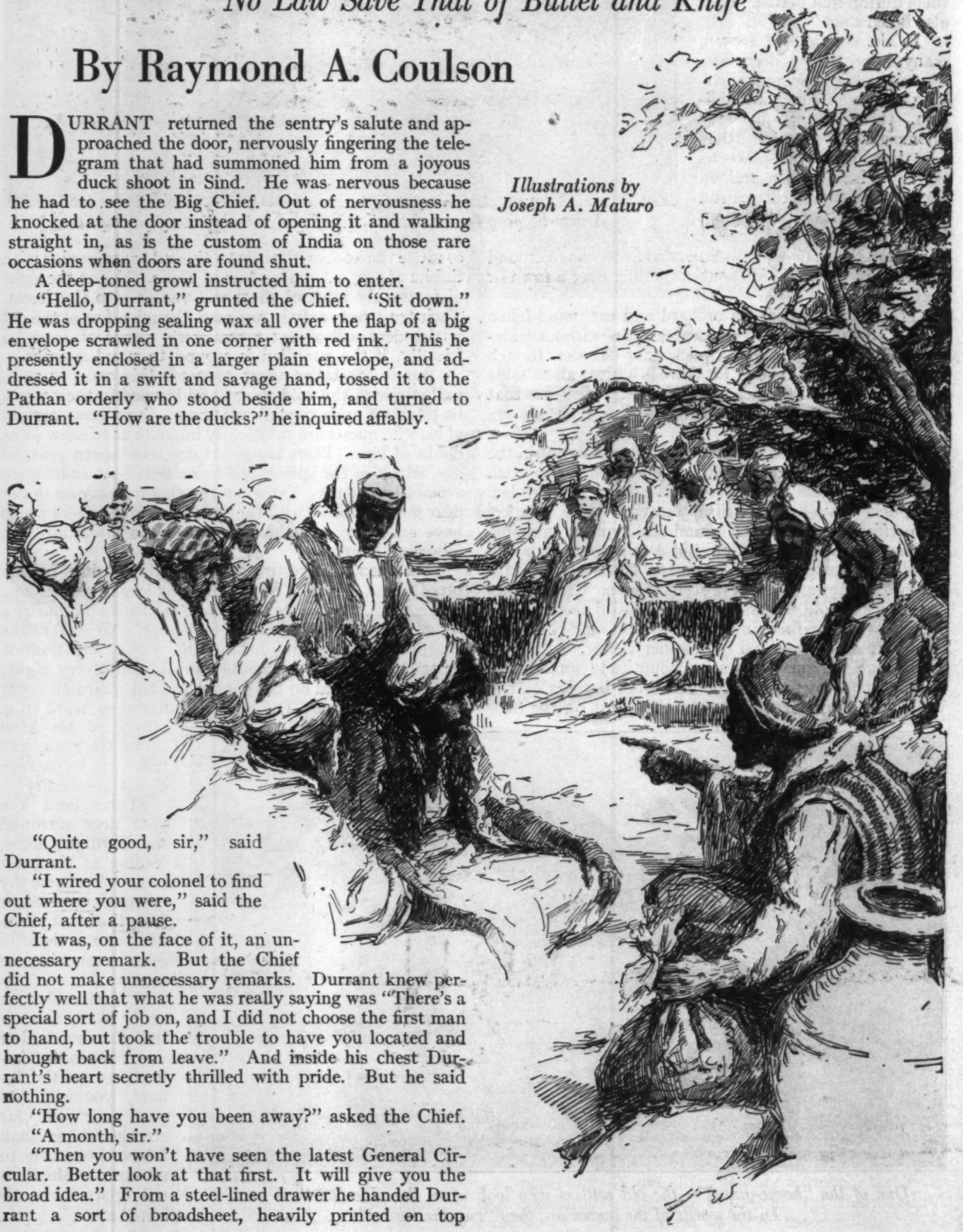
By Raymond A. Coulson

DURRANT returned the sentry's salute and approached the door, nervously fingering the telegram that had summoned him from a joyous duck shoot in Sind. He was nervous because he had to see the Big Chief. Out of nervousness he knocked at the door instead of opening it and walking straight in, as is the custom of India on those rare occasions when doors are found shut.

A deep-toned growl instructed him to enter.

"Hello, Durrant," grunted the Chief. "Sit down." He was dropping sealing wax all over the flap of a big envelope scrawled in one corner with red ink. This he presently enclosed in a larger plain envelope, and addressed it in a swift and savage hand, tossed it to the Pathan orderly who stood beside him, and turned to Durrant. "How are the ducks?" he inquired affably.

Illustrations by Joseph A. Maturo



"Quite good, sir," said Durrant.

"I wired your colonel to find out where you were," said the Chief, after a pause.

It was, on the face of it, an unnecessary remark. But the Chief did not make unnecessary remarks. Durrant knew perfectly well that what he was really saying was "There's a special sort of job on, and I did not choose the first man to hand, but took the trouble to have you located and brought back from leave." And inside his chest Durrant's heart secretly thrilled with pride. But he said nothing.

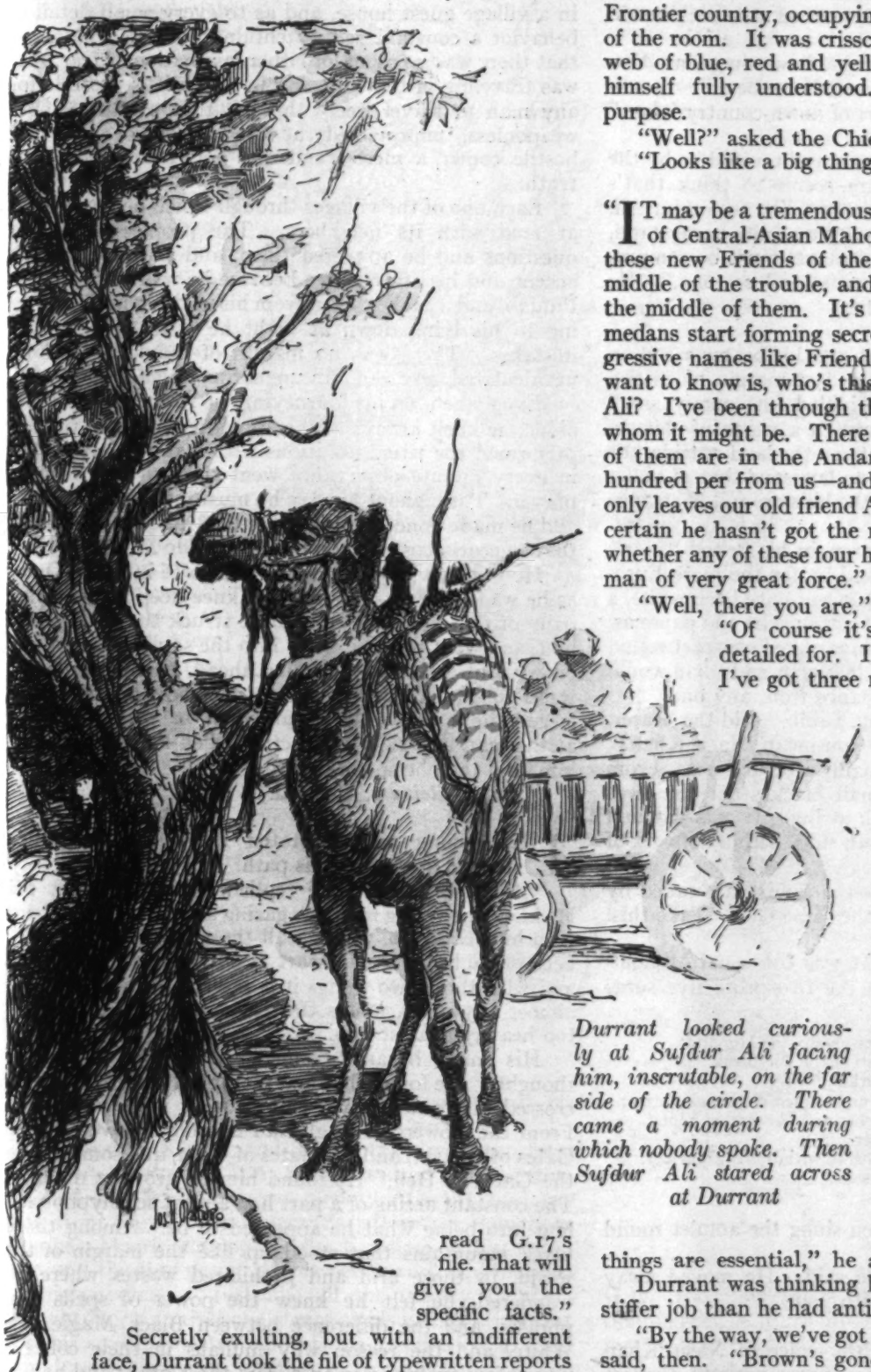
"How long have you been away?" asked the Chief.

"A month, sir."

"Then you won't have seen the latest General Circular. Better look at that first. It will give you the broad idea." From a steel-lined drawer he handed Durrant a sort of broadsheet, heavily printed on top

"SECRET, DESTROY IMMEDIATELY AFTER READING." Durrant recognized it as the usual Intelligence Summary. "That's the thing," said the Chief, indicating a passage in the second column headed "Khalifat: The Friends of the Morning." This Durrant read carefully.

"Got that?" asked the Chief. "Now you'd better read G.17's file. That will give you the specific facts."



Durrant looked curiously at Sufdur Ali facing him, inscrutable, on the far side of the circle. There came a moment during which nobody spoke. Then Sufdur Ali stared across at Durrant

Secretly exulting, but with an indifferent face, Durrant took the file of typewritten reports all headed "Source, G.17." This was evidently to be larger game than anything he had been sent after so far. G.17 was a man with a reputation. Durrant did not know precisely who he was, but had his surmises. He did know that G.17 was a very big wheel indeed in the machine of which he had as yet been only a tiny and inconsiderable cog.

"You just soak it up," said the Chief, "while I get on with business."

For half an hour Durrant read. He made no notes, but stamped indelibly upon his mind facts, names, times, and places. Presently, in the midst of his absorption, he looked up, vaguely aware that he needed something. Of course he found it—a large-scale map of the Trans-Frontier country, occupying the biggest part of one wall of the room. It was crisscrossed all over with a spider's web of blue, red and yellow lines that only the Chief himself fully understood. But it served Durrant's purpose.

"Well?" asked the Chief, when he had finished.

"Looks like a big thing, sir."

"IT may be a tremendously big thing. Here's the whole of Central-Asian Mahommedanism fizzing again, and these new Friends of the Morning apparently in the middle of the trouble, and this man Haji Sufdur Ali in the middle of them. It's rotten enough when Mahommedans start forming secret societies with damned progressive names like Friends of the Morning, and what I want to know is, who's this Mister blooming Haji Sufdur Ali? I've been through the list of everybody we know whom it might be. There are only four possibles. Two of them are in the Andamans, one is now getting six hundred per from us—and well worth it, too—and that only leaves our old friend Abdul Rahman Khan, and I'm certain he hasn't got the moral force for this. I doubt whether any of these four have. Sufdur Ali is evidently a man of very great force." He paused.

"Well, there you are," he went on after a moment. "Of course it's not a job I can have you detailed for. It's a job I can only offer you. I've got three men who might be able to do it, and whose Pashto and Persian are good enough—and you're the first one of the three I thought of. That wandering faker business of yours in the Tirah last year was very good indeed, Durrant." He paused again.

"G.17's stuck up in Kashgar," he continued, "and anyway I couldn't risk him. You see, there's this Conference of the Friends of the Morning somewhere about two months hence—where, I don't know—Khorasan, Herat, somewhere out that way. Even G.17 fogs out four hundred miles or so beyond his personal radius. I want someone to attend the Conference, and we must know about Haji Sufdur Ali. Those two things are essential," he added, with emphasis.

Durrant was thinking hard. This was a bigger and stiffer job than he had anticipated.

"By the way, we've got another chap on it," the Chief said, then. "Brown's gone in through Fort Sandeman way. We've got his wife staying with us—charming girl. You remember her? The Chauncey girl—married Brown a year ago."

Again Durrant understood that this was not mere irrelevant chatter, and that what the Chief was really saying to him was, "I know this is an infernally dangerous job with an odds-on chance that you won't get away with

it, but if Brown, who married a charming girl a year ago, can take it on, surely you, who haven't got a girl at all, can."

Durrant resented the suggestion that he was hesitating. In the midst of his exultation there was fear, it is true—but it was fear of failure to do the work.

"If this Conference turns out to be in Khorasan or anywhere so far as that, I'd better get off at once," he said briefly.

"Right-o, boy. I leave it to you how you go in. You know your own kinds of song-and-dance best."

"I should think as some sort of down-country faker," said Durrant.

"Right. I imagine your best way in would be by the Kurram and Parachinar. G.17 seems to think that's where you'd be likeliest to pick up a line to Sufdur Ali, and Peshawar reports the same. You quite understand, of course, that at all costs no contacts must be compromised. Well, good luck, Durrant, and so long." He resumed his study of documents.

THREE days later Durrant and his bearer stood on a stony slope that was the last margin of British India. Below them a river, divided into many small streams, wound tortuously through a waste of shingle. Across the river all was Yaghistan—the land outside, the bogey country, where there is no law save that of bullet and knife, and where at night the hills are full of strange noises.

Of the two figures, the bearer, in his belted "sports coat" and tweed trousers, looked by far the more European. Durrant wore a *pagri* that had once been white, a short sheepskin coat over soiled cotton shirt and pajamas, and country sandals. A pashmina shawl was cast round his neck. He was a figure that in Northern Indian would not have attracted a second glance from any one.

"All is correct but one thing, Sahib," said the bearer.

"But one thing! What do you mean, Nasir Khan?"

Nasir Khan performed a highly irregular act. From under his shirt he lifted a small black stone that was hung round his neck by a silk string. It was flat and circular in shape, incised on both sides with a network of tortured Arabic.

"Sahib," he said, "your God and mine are called by different names, but they are the same God. Take this. It will protect."

Durrant took the stone. It was the usual Mahommedan amulet, inscribed with the two protective suras from the Koran.

> In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:
> I betake me for refuge to the Lord of the Daybreak
> Against the mischiefs of his creation;
> And against the mischief of the night when it overtaketh me;
> And against the mischief of witches and blowers on knots;
> Against the mischief of the envier.
> Against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawing whisper,
> Who whispereth in men's breasts—
> Against djinn and men.

Durrant hesitated, and then slung the amulet round his neck.

"Thanks, Nasir Khan," he said. He moved away down the slope. "Peace be with you."

"AND with you, Peace!" the voice of Nasir Khan came booming after him. It was, perhaps, the last voice of a friend he would ever hear. But Durrant was not thinking of that. Below him, across the plain, the towers of Yaghistan stood up against the gray of advancing night—tall round towers, each the home and fortress of a family, none with a door lower than twelve feet above the ground, reached by a ladder that was pulled up at night. He was going alone through the gates of what is the harshest country in the world, and the most mysterious, and, for those who have once been infected with its virus, the most fascinating; a country materialistic and mystical, swayed by unknown and incalculable forces.

For Durrant it was a journey the fascination of which could only be remembered afterward. He slept that night in a village guest house, and as to every small detail of behavior a constant self-watchfulness so filled his mind that there was no room for either fascination or fear. He was traveling in the only way in which it is possible for any man to travel freely through that country—quite weaponless, unprotected, at the mercy of the first hostile comer, a mere wandering holy man, seeking the truth.

Each one of the villages through which he passed was at feud with its neighbors. The people asked him questions and he answered them, and they forgave his accent and his strange eye because he was from the far Punjab, and a Seeker. But from his uprising in the morning to his lying down at night he had to make no mistakes. There was no margin of indulgence for an uncalculated gesture in an unguarded moment.

Even when, on his journeying, he seemed to be quite alone, he knelt always at the appointed hours of prayer, performed the ritual ablutions with water or sand, and in every minute observance went through the form of prayer. Throughout his day he must make no mistakes, and he made none—not even the tiny mistake of manner that so nearly cost Burton his life outside Mecca.

He went on because there was a force in him. Once, as he walked down a stony gully knee-deep in the dwarf palm of those parts, a rifle bullet struck the rock beside him, and went whining away into the scrub. He walked on without a pause. Standing ahead, barring his path, was a young man, dark, sullen, a rifle under his arm and a large knife in his belt. Durrant went on steadily, staring at the man in a slow abstraction when he came near to him, and then he spoke clearly.

"*Salaam aleikum*," he said.

THE young man hesitated for a moment, then stepped aside from his path.

"*Aleikum salaam*," he replied. Durrant went on. He knew the young man was gazing after him, but did not turn his head. So, through all those weeks he went on, because he had a single heart and the eye of the Seeker, and with those two things it is possible for a man to get almost anywhere, unless the dice are cogged altogether too heavily against him.

His mind began to run into phrases instead of thoughts. He found that first picture of the towers as he crossed the frontier river had strongly impressed itself. From the Towers of Yaghistan his mind moved to the Gates of Ghazni, and the Gates of Gaza, and somehow to the Gates of Hell. He found himself growing dreamy. The constant acting of a part had almost self-hypnotized him into being what he appeared to be. Among those black mountains that stood up like the margin of the world, in those arid and prohibited wastes where he wandered, he felt he knew the power of spells and phrases, and the difference between Black Magic and White, and the reason why mullahs in their colleges intone forever long passages from the Koran; and he felt at times that he was, in fact, a wanderer in search of the great unknown thing, and not merely a spy seeking political information.

Toward the end he began to use the name of Sufdur Ali.

"We have heard, but we know not, Brother," the village mullahs told him. "He is away beyond."

So Durrant went on, and gradually his information became more precise, and there came a day when he knew that on the next day he should see Sufdur Ali and the Friends of the Morning.

The Conference was by a well under a great fig tree at a crossing of two of the world's immemorial trade routes, that went winding and looping their four-foot widths the one from China into Persia, the other from the Kirghiz Steppe and the Sea of Aral down through Afghanistan to Kandahar and Quetta. As Durrant approached the group under the fig tree, a tall Turkoman barred his way.

"I am come from Hindustan to seek the Friends of the Morning," said Durrant. There was a pause.

"Let him pass," said a voice, and Durrant went on. He advanced to the group with a slow gravity, holding his head high. There were chiefs in the circle, but he was a holy man.

"Peace be with you, Brothers," he said, in greeting.

"And with you, Peace," they replied in solemn chorus. He sat down, with his back to the desert, crossed his hands across his knees, and waited for the conference to begin.

There were Kirghiz and Sart in the circle, men from Tashkent, Kokand, and Samarkand, Persians from Meshed and Ispahan, great gloomy Afghans, and fair men from Pamir. On Durrant's left was a Beluch—a Gumbaz Marri, judging by the braiding on his waistcoat and the tiny design of fine needlework embroidered on his pajamas. "Just like all the beastly Beluch," thought Durrant after one glance at his lustrous, insolent eye, his swelling nostril, and his black, oiled curls. "As proud as sin, and with nothing to be proud of."

NOW that he was in this circle, all the half-trancelike dreaminess had left him. His mind was working on a hair trigger, his senses were animal-keen; his eye took and his brain stored for reference a complete and detailed picture gallery of the Friends of the Morning.

With a tinkling of many silver bells, a great Kabuli camel came swaying down the southern track, bearing a figure swathed to the eyes in gray puttoo. All rose as the camel knelt and the enfolded figure stepped to the ground.

"OH, thou, enwrapped in thy mantle, arise and warn!" stammered a voice from the group. It was a little disease-bitten Persian with drugged and shining eyes, quoting a text of the Koran from slavering mouth. The man in the mantle said nothing. Durrant felt his eyes rest on him for a moment as they flickered around the group. Then Haji Sufdur Ali slowly unfolded the scarf from before his mouth, cast it behind him, and seated himself.

He chanced to be on the opposite side of the circle, directly facing Durrant. It was a high-boned, ascetic face that Durrant saw, finely molded, aristocratic, with deep-set eyes that glowed darkly. He had the quiet and assured gestures of a master. Among all those Eastern men — leaders, some of them—his was clearly the only spirit that counted.

As the Conference went on this became more and more clear. He said little, that which he did say being usually a curt questioning to which the others replied after the manner of juniors presenting reports. The talk was in old Court Persian. Much of what Durrant heard checked and confirmed the reports of G.17. But it supplemented and elaborated that information, carried it much further—as he realized how much further, Durrant prayed with a whole-souled eagerness that he might be permitted to get back to the Chief with his information.

Discontent with the existing Khalifat position was the basis of the trouble, and what was being considered was the possibility of a movement by the whole Central Asian Mahommedanism down through the passes of India into the Punjab and the establishment there of a Khalif who should indeed be an independent temporal sovereign.

"Sahib," said Nasir Khan, "your God and mine are called by different names, but they are the same God. Take this. It will protect"

The loss of the Punjab would mean to Britain the loss of all India, and of all British prestige in the East. These Asiatics did not know, but Durrant knew, that this was part of a greater plot fomented by Russia. Their own part of it, that they thought was the whole, was not yet a plot, but merely a vague scheme. Durrant looked curiously at Sufdur Ali facing him, inscrutable, on the far side of the circle. Was he, also, a pawn, a tool of Moscow and Berlin and the special group in New York, or was he consciously taking for himself a hand in the game of world politics?

THE rambling and elaborate Persian talk continued. Sufdur Ali remained inscrutable. He was merely collecting opinion, not giving it a lead. They were discussing the Sircar—the British rule in India. Was Western civilization decaying at the heart? Was this the moment for the blow?

There came a moment during which nobody spoke. Sufdur Ali, who had been sitting with bowed head, raised his eyes and stared straight across.

"Well," he said in English, "what do you think about it, Durrant? When I was at the London University College in Gower Street, there were some who said you are rotting at the core. Is it so? Is the Sircar recalling its legions as Rome did?"

Durrant felt the shock of that surprise physically. It struck him like a douche of icy water. But he remained motionless. He felt he must not move—in the midst of his whirling thoughts he was aware of knowledge that, given faith, he might still control the situation.

"Recalling its legions?" he said, with quiet irony in his voice. "I am the Sircar, and I am here."

"Yes," Sufdur Ali agreed thoughtfully. "By the way, we have Brown, also, with us." He reached an arm behind him, and flung something round and spinning into the middle of the circle. It was a head, that spun across and somehow reared itself on its neck and came to rest opposite Durrant, and facing him. It faced him with a profound stare, and a ghastly grinning of strong white teeth. Durrant looked again, and saw that the eyes had been scooped out and the lips cut away. And he knew in his soul that this grinning horror was Brown's head.

But he kept an unmoved and contemptuous face.

"It may or may not be *Captain* Brown," he said in a level voice, accenting ever so slightly the title. "You cannot expect me to recognize a head in that state."

"I am afraid you must take my word that it is Captain —Captain Brown." Sufdur Ali stumbled and hesitated just perceptibly in giving the "Captain."

Durrant noted with exultation that he could be shaken as to manners. "I can keep hold of him," he thought to himself fiercely, "keep hold of him, keep hold of him."

"Our friend from Gumbaz brought him along." Sufdur Ali indicated the proud Beluch with the oiled and hyacinthine curls.

Durrant was aware of close presences behind him, and the sound of an unsheathing knife.

"No, not the knife—yet," said a soft voice. "A rope."

He did not turn his head or move an eyelash. The situation hung balanced, and he had a sense—knew, indeed—that the preservation of that balance depended on his immobility and absolute calm. An uneasy movement, even a turn of his head away from Sufdur Ali, would break the tension, the rope would be around him, and at once from a controlling mind he would become a mere desperate human animal, rolling on the ground in a hopeless and undignified struggle. It was necessary that he should go on believing in himself supremely.

He spoke again, this time in Persian.

"That is a detail." He indicated the maltreated head on the ground before him. "It does not matter. I do not matter. There are many more like me—many, many more. You ask me what I say, and I say it is impossible to overthrow us. And I say there is no help for you in the Russia of today—the Russia of the revolution. The Power of the North is evil."

There was a mutter round the circle.

"It is true," said a Kirghiz who sat near to Sufdur Ali. "The power of the North is evil. I have seen it, and I have seen the Cheka at Tiflis and Batum and Sevastopol and Odessa. It is evil."

He had indeed a weary, singed look, as if he had been somewhere close to the devil when he spoke of the Cheka —the Extraordinary Commission of the Bolsheviks.

There was silence. Everything waited. And at last from the mosque came that call that follows the sun across such great spaces of Africa and Asia—the call to prayer. It was the hour of prayer, and that ringing, brazen voice filled the evening sky with its call to all the faithful.

Figures flitted by close to the gray buildings and into the gateway of the mosque. The Friends of the Morning stirred. One rose and walked quietly to the mosque. Two or three followed. One by one they rose and went to prayer, until only Sufdur Ali remained, still impassive, inscrutable, regarding Durrant with something ironic and questioning in his eye. After a moment he, too, rose and followed the others, and Durrant was alone. He waited. Nothing stirred. Durrant, also, walked into the mosque, knelt, and prayed to the merciful and compassionate God.

When he came out again in the falling dusk, Sufdur Ali awaited him.

"Go back, Durrant Sahib," he said. "Go back and tell them in India what you have seen. Here they want—you know—to play with you a little, and then kill you. But I, Sufdur Ali, say you shall go back safely. And I say, also," Sufdur Ali added, "that there will be no movement from Turkestan yet. You are right. The power of the North is evil, and the Sircar is still strong."

THREE weeks later Durrant came to the frontier river of many streams. On the far side were the lights of India, and even as he stood there, a hillman approached, saluted, and handed him a small package. Inside Durrant found a locket on a thin gold chain, and a letter that ran:

DURRANT SAHIB:

Captain Brown was a brave man. I send this of his, which his people may care to have. Tell the Sircar as I said, that there will be no movement—yet. SUFDUR ALI.

Durrant opened the locket, and closed it again quickly. It was not an amulet that Brown had carried round his neck, but a photograph of his wife.

When a travel-stained faker strolled into his room at Thal, Major Jardyne first glanced swiftly toward his revolver. Then he said: "Hello, Durrant! Just in from one of your comic-opera stunts? Bearer, get the Sahib a bath."

"By the way," said Durrant, a half hour later, as he sat in the major's big chair, "do you happen to know where Mrs. Brown is—the wife of *Pukka* Brown?"

"Yes," Jardyne replied. "I know. She's staying with the Pett-Hambroughs at Lahore for the Christmas dancing. But, look here, let's go across to mess. We've time for a drink before dinner."

"No, thanks. I won't go across," Durrant was very tired. "I can't eat and daren't drink. Will you send me a typewriting machine from your office, Jardyne? I've got to get my report out tonight, and then in the morning—I've got to go to Lahore."

Haverstraw's Reckless Yielding to Impulse Has Dire Consequences in—

The Making of A Man

By Francis Lynde

Illustrations by Theodore Van Gorp

IN the Middle Western town where he grew up, John Haverstraw was catalogued as a bright young fellow who would most likely amount to something if he should ever "steady down" as his fellow townsmen put it.

At twenty-four, Haverstraw was still "Jackie" to all Millburg, and a mild excrescence on the body economic. Which is to say that he had taken the hurdles of a college course with more or less satisfaction to himself and the retired-farmer uncle who had adopted him, was able to live without laboring—chiefly upon the interest of what he owed to a world of labor—and was in love with a girl.

Maisie was the girl's name, and it fitted her only superficially, since behind the baby-blue eyes, kissable lips and peach-blow complexion, and under the wealth of nut-brown hair harmonious therewith, dwelt a keen and most logical little mind, brilliant as a diamond, and equally competent when it came to scratching the glass-hard surface of facts as they are. Which is not at all the kind of mind one associates with the playful and rather kittenish name of "Maisie."

At the time when we begin to consider Jack and Maisie, the great war was breaking upon the nation like a thunderclap, and the call to arms was racing—well, not exactly racing, perhaps, but at least creeping — over the land. Haverstraw had heard it—he was seldom deaf to a call of any kind—and his application for admission to an officers' training camp had already gone in. It was at this conjuncture that Maisie's sharp-faceted little mind began to function upon the facts.

"You are a creature of impulse, Jackie," said Maisie. "You have no thought for consequences"

"It's a mistake, Jackie," she declared decisively. They had been playing tennis, the first game of the season, and on a grass court which they had found to be still soggy from its winter soakings. Maisie's feet were wet, and she was edging toward the house and dry stockings and shoes, with Haverstraw keeping step with her.

"My going into the army, you mean?"

"Oh, no; your trying to be an officer. You can't be, you know; not the kind that is going to be needed in France."

"Help! Police!" he cried. Then: "Heavens—how you can gore a fellow's poor little lambkin of self-conceit when you try! Why can't I be an officer, I'd like to ask?"

"You know as well as I do. You haven't grown up yet. You're just a great, big, husky, lovable boy, Jackie."

He laughed; not uproariously—rather apologetically.

"You say that because we have grown up together. I'll never be anything but a boy to Millburg. It's always that way in the town where a fellow has lived all his life."

"BUT it doesn't have to be," she retorted. "You are a creature of impulse, Jackie. Whatever comes into the back part of your head is what you do—on the spur of the moment, and without a thought for the consequences."

"I like that—from the girl I'm going to marry!"

"From the girl who will probably be foolish enough to marry you in the end—most likely to your sorrow and hers, and everybody else's."

"But don't you think I ought to be a soldier?"

"Of course; every fit

man in America ought to be now. And every woman, too, as far as she can be. I'm going to see if I can't learn to be a nurse."

"You mustn't; you're far too lovely. You'd heal broken arms and legs, and leave a string of broken hearts behind you a mile long. But you haven't told me yet what you think I ought to do."

"You ought to enlist, like other young men—like Billy Whittles and Bob Mahoney. Then you'd be under orders; you'd be told what to do and how to do it; and somebody else would carry the responsibility. Jackie, dear, I—I'm afraid for you any other way!"

AT the end of this little heart-to-heart talk Haverstraw went his way, rather thoughtful; more thoughtful than he had been at any time since a certain kindly old professor of mathematics had taken him aside in the closing months of his senior year in college to tell him that his uneven work was probably going to cost him his degree. Did Maisie really believe he couldn't put the car into high and keep it there? He would show her!

He did, in a way. With a promptness incredible in mere governmental matters, he got his orders to report at the Fort Oglethorpe camp for the training of candidates for commission in the Officers' Reserve Corps. On the crest of a fresh wave of enthusiasm he packed his bag and went to bid Maisie good-by.

"No cold water, this time, if you love me, dear girl," was the way he began the leave-taking. "I'm in, and if I don't pull down a captaincy——"

"You won't," she prophesied calmly. "You are too young. Imagine *you* trying to daddy two hundred and fifty men! It is a lucky thing for them that there is no chance of it."

"Still harping upon my irresponsible streak?" he groaned.

"Still seeing you as you never seem to be able to see yourself. At first you'll do so well that everybody from the colonel to the corporals will think they have drawn a celestial prize. But you won't keep it up for three months on end. I know you too well, Jackie dear."

There was more of this—considerably more; and, further along, some things more nearly adapted to a parting between lovers. For, with the abounding luck of his kind, Haverstraw had won the love of the young woman whose name fitted everthing but her mentality, and she had committed herself for better or worse, her heart gloating affectionately over the better at the same moment that her head was weighing the worse and finding it more or less unnerving.

"Do try to realize what it will mean, Jackie, if, by some awful shortsightedness on the part of the colonel, or whoever it may be who will do the recommending, you should be given even a second lieutenantcy," was her final word. "Every one is saying that this is a war of the younger officers; that a lieutenant carries responsibilities as heavy as a colonel's used to be."

"Cheer up!" he laughed back from the gate. "I'm not precisely at the foot of the class, and I never have been. Get Aunt Lora to bring you down to Chattanooga some time during the three months, and you'll see me walking up the ladder as steadily as a house painter."

FRESH from doing nothing, and as fit as a carefree life and a splendid physique could make him, Haverstraw passed his physical examination with flying colors and flung himself zealously into the grind of training. Being, as Maisie had said, a lovable fellow, he soon won the good will of every man in his barrack; he was every man's friend and any man's creditor, as long as his money lasted. What was more to the purpose, he won the commendation of his instructors, a rather dazed coterie of gentlemen from West Point, laboring, with what fortitude they could summon, to implant in the cadet officers in three months the essentials of what West Point had taken a leisurely four-year course to implant in them.

On the drill ground Haverstraw, learning anything he attacked almost by intuition, speedily took rank as one of the picked men of his squad; and as for the manuals and other books, he had but to yawn over them a few times to find himself the subject of honorable mention. True, there were occasional let-ups, but they were only slight ones. Iron-bound routine, days so tightly packed with tasks as to leave no room for the resurgent impulse, gave neither time nor opportunity for derelictions of any sort. And Haverstraw had always worked well under an overload.

"No bad breaks yet," he wrote boastingly to Maisie, when the training period was deep in its second half. "If you've been placing any small bets on the chance of my flunking, you'd better hedge. I'm a winner, hands down. Last week we took our first long hike, to the Catoosa rifle range and back. Did I have to beg a ride on one of the Q. M. D. trucks? Not visibly, my dear! This week we're in the trenches; mud till you can't tell whether you've lost both legs below the knee, or whether they're merely playing peekaboo with you in the muck. Are we downhearted? No, no, no!

"I'm awfully sorry you can't come to Chattanooga; sorrier still that you think it needful to bone away so hard on the nursey-nursey job. And I don't at all fancy the idea of your going over with the home hospital unit as a nurse's aid. I don't want you to go over at all. One member of the family—to be—is a-plenty to take the chance of *spurlos versenkt*.

"One other word, and it will show you how reasonable I have become. That captaincy notion went flooie the first week I was here. I'll take whatever they hand me and be thankful. Incidentally, this is a much bigger job than I had any idea it was. And I wasn't so chumpish about the probable size of it, either."

THIS was Haverstraw's estimate of himself; not too serious, as it will appear, and not lacking the saving sense of humor which tends to clarify the otherwise opaque waters of sheer self-conceit. Other and wholly extraneous opinions of him were now beginning to take shape, as evidenced by a fragmentary conversation between two of the West Pointers who were to pass upon the qualifications of the candidates at the close of the training period.

"That young Haverstraw in Company Eight," said the senior. "He seems to be taking all the hurdles with the high jump. Only one thing against him, that I can see: little inclined to be kiddish, isn't he? There's a touch of the undergraduate in him. I've sized him up as a fellow who might possibly develop a disposition to quit and go fishing at the wrong time."

"I've had his home record looked up," the junior offered. "Capital fellow—good breeding—friends with everybody in sight—capable as the very devil when he applies himself, and all that. But right there is the grub in the chestnut. Half of the time in college he didn't apply himself. Old Booker, who was my professor in prep school, has written me about him. Fine mind, he says, but with only a slight soul-grip on it. You hit it right when you spoke of the inopportune fishing trips."

"Well, we'll watch him through," was the senior's decision. "We've got to have officers, and the order has gone out to make 'em on the do-it-while-you-wait plan. Check Haverstraw's name. If he holds up even reason-

ably well——" and so on and so on.

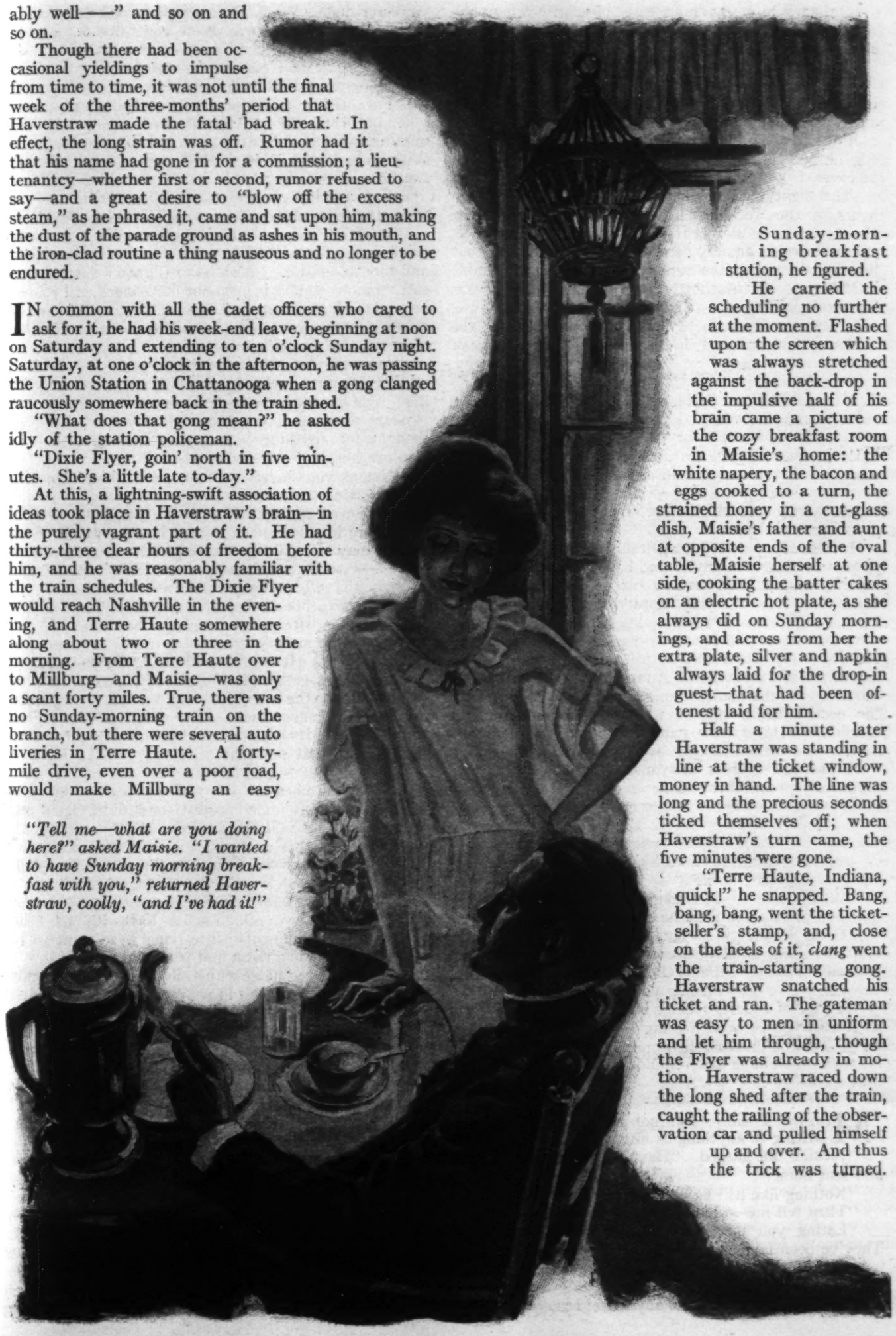
Though there had been occasional yieldings to impulse from time to time, it was not until the final week of the three-months' period that Haverstraw made the fatal bad break. In effect, the long strain was off. Rumor had it that his name had gone in for a commission; a lieutenantcy—whether first or second, rumor refused to say—and a great desire to "blow off the excess steam," as he phrased it, came and sat upon him, making the dust of the parade ground as ashes in his mouth, and the iron-clad routine a thing nauseous and no longer to be endured.

IN common with all the cadet officers who cared to ask for it, he had his week-end leave, beginning at noon on Saturday and extending to ten o'clock Sunday night. Saturday, at one o'clock in the afternoon, he was passing the Union Station in Chattanooga when a gong clanged raucously somewhere back in the train shed.

"What does that gong mean?" he asked idly of the station policeman.

"Dixie Flyer, goin' north in five minutes. She's a little late to-day."

At this, a lightning-swift association of ideas took place in Haverstraw's brain—in the purely vagrant part of it. He had thirty-three clear hours of freedom before him, and he was reasonably familiar with the train schedules. The Dixie Flyer would reach Nashville in the evening, and Terre Haute somewhere along about two or three in the morning. From Terre Haute over to Millburg—and Maisie—was only a scant forty miles. True, there was no Sunday-morning train on the branch, but there were several auto liveries in Terre Haute. A forty-mile drive, even over a poor road, would make Millburg an easy Sunday-morning breakfast station, he figured.



"Tell me—what are you doing here?" asked Maisie. "I wanted to have Sunday morning breakfast with you," returned Haverstraw, coolly, "and I've had it!"

He carried the scheduling no further at the moment. Flashed upon the screen which was always stretched against the back-drop in the impulsive half of his brain came a picture of the cozy breakfast room in Maisie's home: the white napery, the bacon and eggs cooked to a turn, the strained honey in a cut-glass dish, Maisie's father and aunt at opposite ends of the oval table, Maisie herself at one side, cooking the batter cakes on an electric hot plate, as she always did on Sunday mornings, and across from her the extra plate, silver and napkin always laid for the drop-in guest—that had been oftenest laid for him.

Half a minute later Haverstraw was standing in line at the ticket window, money in hand. The line was long and the precious seconds ticked themselves off; when Haverstraw's turn came, the five minutes were gone.

"Terre Haute, Indiana, quick!" he snapped. Bang, bang, bang, went the ticket-seller's stamp, and, close on the heels of it, *clang* went the train-starting gong. Haverstraw snatched his ticket and ran. The gateman was easy to men in uniform and let him through, though the Flyer was already in motion. Haverstraw raced down the long shed after the train, caught the railing of the observation car and pulled himself up and over. And thus the trick was turned.

Ordinary mortals, or at least those with whom the responsibilities are decently present, would have had a sharp return of sanity as soon as Time gave Opportunity a chance to drag Consequences into the field of vision. Not so Jackie Haverstraw. Buying a paper and filling his pipe, he settled himself in the smoking compartment and was speedily lost in the baseball page. The camp routine had given him scant leisure to keep abreast of the Big League games, and there was much lost ground to be covered.

The flight to Terre Haute, devouring some fifteen hours of the week-end leave of absence, figured for Haverstraw only as fuel to feed the fires of impatience, and his heaviest anxiety perched itself upon the fear that he might be late at the Sunday-morning breakfast table in Millburg. At the ghostly hour of three A. M. he was hammering at the doors of sundry garages in Terre Haute, and it was well on to half-past four by the time the Millburg start was made in a hack auto of the vintage of 1907.

NEVERTHELESS Maisie, radiant in a sheer summer breakfast gown, and with a shining morning face pretty enough to thaw the veins of an iceberg, was just buttering the first plate of delicately browned batter cakes when the deserter walked in and took the vacant place at the table amid cries of—well, they were decently of welcome, of course, but the keynote was unmitigated and gasping astoundment.

Having, as a part of his mental equipment, the ability absolutely to ignore any future beyond the present and passing moment, Haverstraw carried the breakfast off handsomely, entertaining motherly, gray-haired Aunt Lora at one end of the table, and the grave-faced country-town banker at the other, with hilarious stories of the training camp, doing full justice, meanwhile, to the deliciously browned cakes. Aunt Lora, regarding with kindling eyes the manly young figure so aptly set off by the neatly fitting officer's uniform—like most of the candidates, Haverstraw had anticipated the day and late of his commissioning by buying the uniform for week-end wear—forgot all former delinquencies and was maternally proud of the soldier guest. And if the grave-faced father was turning sundry curious questions over in the back part of his mind, he kept them judiciously to himself.

Breakfast over, the two elders faded away, leaving the younglings to each other.

"Well?" said Maisie, compressing all the questions that had to be asked into the one word.

"Great Peter, girl! You're the prettiest, sweetest, most ravishing thing that ever crossed the big road—if you only knew it!" babbled the young lover. "You don't know how I've been missing you!"

"Y-yes, of course, Jackie; but I want to know now what else you've been missing"—this out of the inner recesses of the practical little mind. "Didn't you write me that the training camp wouldn't close until some time next week?"

"MAYBE I did. I'm not responsible when I'm writing to anything as intoxicating as you are."

"Jackie!" she gasped. "Have you been turned down and sent home?"

"Nothing like it!" he retorted jauntily.

"Then tell me—what are you doing here?"

"Eating you up with my eyes, you sugar plum. They've been famishing all summer for a sight of you."

"*Jackie!* I *won't* be trifled with!" Then: "Oh, you wretched, wretched *boy!* Will you never grow up and be a man? You needn't tell me any more; I know just what you have done. You have taken your week-end leave to come home on, when you *know* you can't get back in time!"

Haverstraw had his watch out and was moving a scheduling finger over the dial.

"I wanted to have Sunday-morning breakfast with you, and I've had it," he returned coolly. "Fifteen minutes from now I'll catch the Interurban for Louisville. With no bad luck, I'll be there in time to catch the night southbound train on the L. & N., and there you are!"

"But your leave? Haven't you been writing me that your week-ends expire at ten o'clock Sunday night?"

"What if I have? The man who wouldn't take some small chance for a sight of you ought to be court-martialed and shot at sunrise. Listen here: I'll reach Chattanooga early tomorrow morning—about five o'clock, if I remember right. A hack auto will shoot me out to the camp in thirty minutes, a good half hour ahead of reveille. And there you are again."

"Jackie," she said solemnly, "you'll never be a soldier, or anything else worth while, the longest day you live! You know what you've done; you saw a train ready to start north, and you just took it without a single thought for anything beyond this breakfast with us. You are hopeless—simply hopeless!"

"Not as your lover, I'm not, sweet thing!" he said, with his arms around her.

"Yes; even as that. How do I know that you won't let a crazy impulse smash even that, some time? Some woman may come along, with a prettier face than mine, or a—a—eyes that can't see as mine can't help seeing, or a tongue that will honey you, and——"

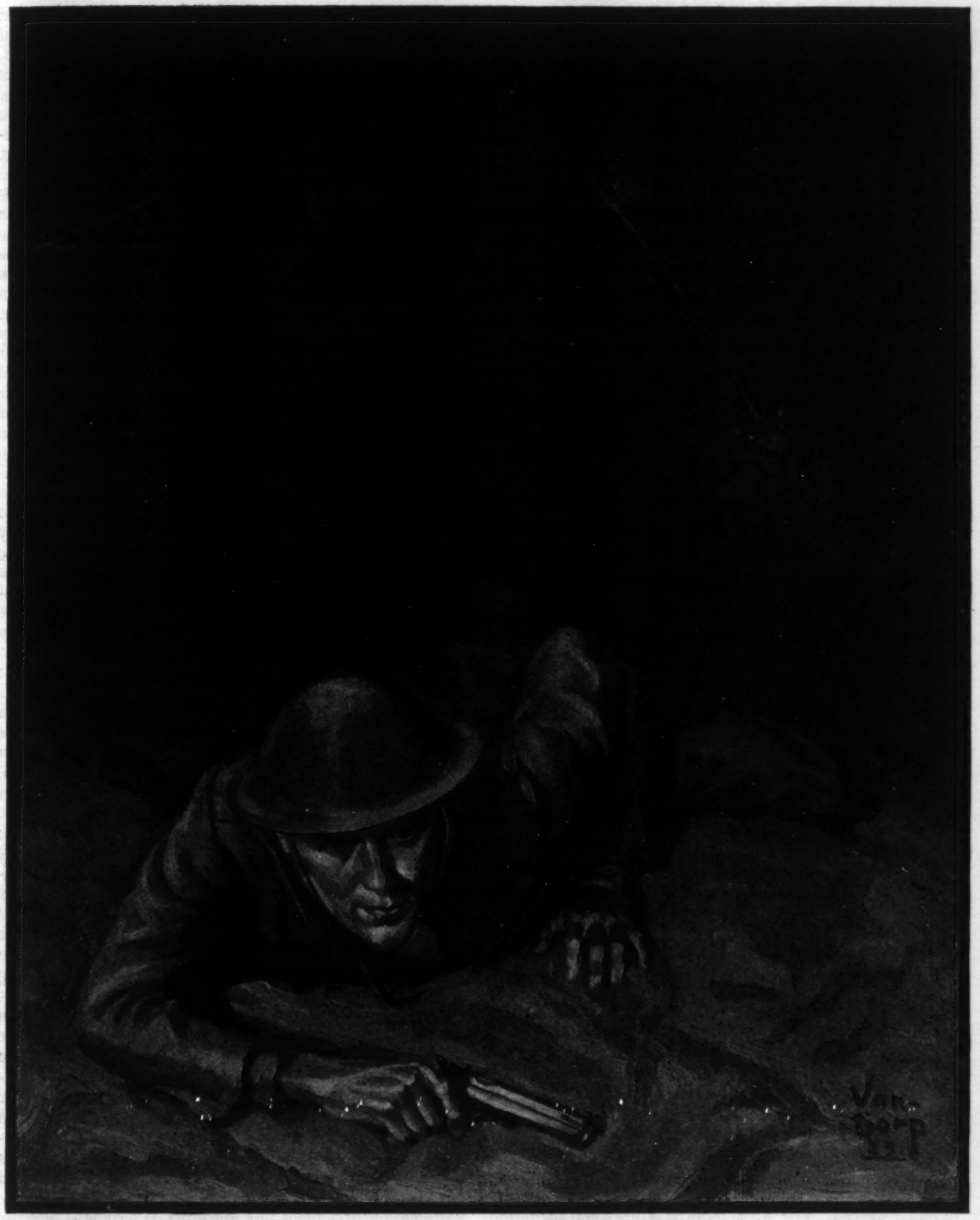
A kiss with liberal footage stopped that sort of talk, there and then; after which her reproaches were swallowed up in pathetic anxiety lest Haverstraw should miss his Interurban car. He didn't miss it, and they had a blessed five minutes together at the station; five times sixty seconds filled to the brim with solemn promises on Jackie's part to—well, never again. The next time the vagrant impulse showed its head it should be shot at sight and out of hand. So that was that.

OF the patched-up steeplechase back from mid-Indiana Millburg to north-Georgia Fort Oglethorpe perhaps the less said the better. Most naturally, the Interurban, on this vital occasion, had to be late, and, instead of catching an evening train out of Louisville, Haverstraw got one late Sunday night. Accordingly, it was three o'clock Monday afternoon before he reached the training camp. Summoned forthwith to headquarters, the delinquent—since lying wasn't one of his weaknesses—made a clean and truthful breast of it.

The sober-faced judge with a silver leaf on his shoulder strap let the silence sink in a bit before he pronounced sentence. Then it came.

"Mr. Haverstraw, for three months we've been trying our best to make you young men understand something of the gravity of the responsibilities that will rest upon you as officers in the United States Army in time of war. In your case it appears that we have completely failed. This is not the first time you have overstayed your week-end leave. We are sorry to lose you, because in many respects you have the making of a good officer in you. But your one lack is fatal. You are dismissed from the camp."

Haverstraw left the headquarters shack fairly stunned. That it would ever come to this—dismissal in disgrace, and within one short week of the attainment of the goal—well, it was simply incredible—unbelievable. Yet the guillotine stroke had fallen, and he knew well that the court which had tried him and found him wanting



Flat on his face and wriggling like a clumsy worm, Haverstraw edged forward in the pitchy darkness

never reversed its decrees. There had been other men dismissed, and he had seen every lever—political and personal—broken in ineffectual endeavors to pry them back again. It was all over.

His company was out at bayonet drill when he reached his barrack, and the barn-like building was empty. For a time he sat on the edge of his cot with his head in his hands, trying to make up his mind what to do. To go back to Millburg—and Maisie—a broken man was blankly impossible. She would pity him, of course, and despise him—as she should. Out of the hideous chaos of things he could dig only a sort of whipped-dog longing to efface himself; to slink into some hole or corner where nobody would ever see or hear of him again.

After a while he got up and began to overhaul his belongings. The civilian clothes he had worn on entering

the training camp were still in his bag, and he put them on. In the ordinary course of things he should have returned his service uniform and equipment to the quartermaster, but shame stabbed him again and he left the uniform neatly folded on the cot, together with the officer's uniform he had bought in anticipation of the step that would now never be taken.

THE officers' training camp named "of Fort Oglethorpe" was not at the Fort itself; it was three-quarters of a mile distant in the Chickamauga National Military Park. During the period of the first training camp the Fort was used as an assembling and recruiting camp for the regulars. When Haverstraw left the barrack he made a roundabout circuit to avoid headquarters and the camp street. Half an hour later, dusty and begrimed, he tramped into the post at Oglethorpe and accosted the first man he came across with the blue cord of the infantry on his hat and a sergeant's chevrons on his sleeve.

"Sure, Mike!" said the sergeant, after he had listened to the dusty one's plea. "You look like a pretty tough young huskie, all right. Hain't been breakin' jail anywheres, have you? No? Good enough; come along with me and we'll sign you up. Thirty iron men a month and everything found, and thirty-three when you go across. And, say, you're playin' in big luck—if you can pass the medical. The 'Steenth—that's us—has orders to entrain to-night—for somewheres."

News, or rather no news, of Jackie Haverstraw reached Millburg in due time, though not until after his uncle had twice written to the authorities to inquire what had become of the missing man. Eventually, a brief note came, saying that John Haverstraw had been dropped from the cadet officers' rolls as unavailable.

At this, Maisie's father shook his head regretfully and spoke his mind.

"It's no use, daughter; you'll just have to take your medicine and give him up. It's just as I've always told you: he hasn't the sense of responsibility that it takes to make a whole man." And Maisie, a bit pale as to the kissable lips, but otherwise as attractive as ever, apparently agreed. For, some months later, when the home hospital unit was ordered to France, she went with it as a nurse's aid.

Maisie's first glimpse of *La Patrie*, gained from the deck of a transport through a driving rain, fell in the month of February, the month in which the Americans had been given their first taste of the real thing in trench warfare—the taste now rapidly increasing to a full meal. Following their customary practice when a fresh enemy was known to be on their front, the Germans were *strafing* the newcomers.

Trenches were sprayed with *flammenwerfer*, hospital units bombed from the skies, ambulances made special targets, and storm after storm of gas shells put over. Nightly there were raids and counter-raids, and cruelties many and abominable. One night a patrol, working in No Man's Land, found two of their men, missing from the night before and supposed to have been taken prisoner, lying in a shell crater, only slightly wounded, but with their tongues cut out.

Haverstraw was with the patrol that found the mutilated men. Since his hasty enlistment at Fort Oglethorpe in August of the previous year, much water had gone under the bridges for him. Vanished now were all the light-hearted turnings aside which had finally cost him his chance for a commission and made him an unmarked unit in the rank and file. Under a spitting machine-gun fire, and with star shells bursting overhead to make them drop their tortured burdens and flatten themselves upon the ground at every step, the members of the patrol, with Haverstraw to help, carried the two men into the lines. Day by day the victim of impulse had been learning the hard lesson that no human undertaking is done until it is completely finished.

Still he could not be entirely sure of himself. Maisie's words had come true. As a private in the ranks he had but to do what he was told to do, and there was always some one at hand to see that he did it. Like the drunkard who can not be certain that his resolution of reform will hold until he has actually pushed the poured-out drink aside in the strength of his own will, Haverstraw found himself hungering and thirsting for the proving trial.

The chance he had been longing for came two nights after the finding of the two mutilated men. A machine gun, cunningly concealed on the right, and in advance of, the enemy's line, was making No Man's Land uninhabitable for the patrols. Its fire had been kept up at irregular intervals from nightfall to midnight; it had taken its toll through two loopholes between the sandbags, and its trajectory was so low that a man on his hands and knees was as certain of being hit as if he stood upright.

A LITTLE past midnight, after the gun had scored a third hit in the American trench, a call was made for a single volunteer to go out and try to find and silence it. Because he happened to be posted within arm's reach of the officer making the call, Haverstraw won the toss. His orders were brief and to the point.

"It's a thousand-to-one shot, but we can't stand this thing indefinitely," snapped the lieutenant, who had asked for the forlorn-hope volunteer. "I'd rather go myself than send you or any other man, but the general

The Time for Silence Has Passed

THE use of poison gas in warfare was forbidden by the Washington Limitation of Armaments Conference.

Yet every great power is preparing for the use of gas in the next war!

It is time that we realized the facts of this amazing situation. Here are the civilized nations of the globe strenuously preparing for the use of that very agency of warfare which they themselves barred in solemn conclave less than two years ago.

Why? How can such a situation be tolerated? What are the actual facts about the sort of fighting we shall see if another world war bursts upon us some day?

"If ever again our boys march off to war, they will have to face poison gas—and to face it in quantities not even dreamed of in the late conflict!"

So declares Brigadier General Amos A. Fries, Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service of the United States Army, in an interview for the October issue of McCLURE'S.

It is an article filled with astonishing facts—facts that every American should know. General Fries discloses in the most interesting fashion why it is that the United States, like other nations, is preparing for the use of poison gas despite the resolutions we adopted jointly with France, Great Britain and Japan on January 7, 1922, forever outlawing gas as a weapon of war.

Don't miss this and the half dozen other important articles in the October McCLURE'S.

has cut the lone-hand stunt out for us since Leshing got his and left his section for half a night without an officer. Take a sack of grenades and your revolver, and for God's sake keep your head down. Any message to leave?"

"Yes," said Haverstraw quietly. "Somewhere, in one of the hospitals back of us, there is an Indiana unit, with a girl named Maisie Davis in it serving as a nurse's aid—so I've just heard. If I 'go west' I wish you'd tell her I found a way to brace, at last. She'll understand."

"All right—if I have to—as I hope I shan't. Are you all set? Over you go, then, with the best of luck!"

When Haverstraw found himself fairly over the top a strange sense of elation was singing in his veins. For the first time in his experience as an enlisted man he was entirely "on his own." There was no one to give him further orders, and no one to see to it that the orders which had been given were carried out. From this time on, Jack Haverstraw was in command, and it was up to him to see to it that he made good.

In going over the parapet he had chosen the instant immediately following a spraying of the machine-gun bullets, cannily arguing that it would take the gunners at least a few seconds to insert a fresh cartridge belt. With a good mental picture of the zigzag outlet through the wire entanglement, he stood up and ran for those few seconds, falling flat in time to escape the next nozzle-blast from the invisible lead sprayer.

Beyond this there was no more foot work. The desultory fire from the hidden gun emplacement kept a thin zone just above his head singing with bullets. Flat on his face, and wriggling like a clumsy worm, he edged forward, dragging the sack of grenades and steering a course, as well as the intermittent glare of the star shells and the alternating periods of pitchy darkness would permit, for the right of the enemy trench section. The course was hard to keep. Shell craters turned him aside, and once he had to inch his way around a dead body. The light of the star shells would have helped if he had dared lift his head. But he was afraid that his face, daubed as it was with trench mud, might show and draw rifle fire from the trench.

UNDER such conditions it was not very singular that he lost his way, as he did, bringing up against the German barbed wire at a point near the center of the trench sector. Lying motionless for a second or so to get his breath and his bearings, he heard voices, and between the rat-tat-tat bursts of the gun he distinguished words.

Now Millburg, Indiana, as every one knows, was originally "Muellersburg," and to this day German is spoken by many of the older Mennonite settlers. Learning a language as easily as he did most other things, Haverstraw rated among his haphazard accomplishments the ability to understand German.

In a flash all thoughts of the order he had volunteered to carry out vanished. Here was a chance for which men nightly risked their lives; the chance to overhear and report an enemy talk which might prove of incalculable advantage at headquarters.

The listener drew his sack of grenades up for an elbow rest and prepared to translate and memorize. Then, like a sudden slap in the face, came the realization that this was his test; that once more he was going off at a tangent, yielding to an impulse.

The bare realization was enough. The hard weeks and months of training as a private had wrought their perfect work. Turning a deaf ear to the talk beyond the wire barrier, he clawed the muddy earth and crept on.

The snappy lieutenant's verbal report to his captain tells the remainder of it with military succinctness:

"We kept track of him as well as we could—which, of course, was only when the star shells lighted things up for us. He lost his way at first and brought up against the German wire opposite our center. Then we got glimpses of him as he worked around to the left—our left. In a little time we knew by the slow progress he was making that he'd been hit."

"Yet he got the gun?"

"He did, indeed. I don't know yet just how he did it, but he must have crawled around and got on top of the concrete lid of the pit, and then reached over and chucked his grenades, one at a time, through the firing slot. The last glimpse we had of him he was rolling over and over toward a shell crater, with the Germans in the trench firing at him as if they were trying to stop a battle charge. We supposed, of course, that they'd got him. It didn't seem as if a rat could come through that rifle fire alive. But just before daylight his bunkie and another man crept out to see, and they brought him in—what there was left of him."

NOW this captain in the fighting 'Steenth had been one of the instructors in the Fort Oglethorpe training camp, but he had never let Haverstraw know that he had recognized him.

"You can't always tell, even after you've been shown," he returned, half musingly. "That man of yours, Folwell, was within a short week of a commission last August, and he broke himself. I didn't recognize him in the ranks until after we had come over here. If he doesn't die, I think we may safely say he's cured."

"He won't die," the lieutenant prophesied. "Any man who could endure what he did in that shell hole before we got him out—all shot in holes and keeping himself from bleeding to death only by using his thumbs for tourniquets—simply doesn't know how to die. You say he was a slacker in the training camp? I wish we had a thousand more like him. His girl is an aid at our base hospital. He gave me a message for her just before he went over the top in case he shouldn't come back."

"He has been sent back to the base?"

"I should suppose so, by this time."

The lieutenant's supposition was correct. At about the time of its utterance a broken, bandaged and splint-spliced man, with his head immovable in its wrappings, a leg rigid, and on his chest a lump half as big as an orange where the dressing-station surgeon had given him an antitetanic shot, was looking up into a pair of baby-blue eyes that were winking fast to keep the tears back.

"Cut out—the hero stuff—angel-girl," he was whispering hoarsely. "Cut it out and tell me—about yourself."

"You mustn't try to talk," she forbade. "They would only give me five minutes with you. And about myself—there's nothing to tell, Jackie dear. Of course, I knew just what you'd done when you were—when you didn't get your commission. And now, to see you this way—but I mustn't. The doctor——"

"Let the doctor—go hang. What I was trying to tell you was that this hero business they've been filling you up with is all tommyrot. I'm no hero—not so you could notice it. I'd heard you were here at the base, and I wanted—wanted to tell you about—about the foolishness that isn't any more. And the quickest way to get to you was to let the Heinies shoot me up a bit. See?"

But what she saw was the rollicking, carefree boy grown up to be a man; a man who could fight his battle stubbornly to the end, dying, after the thing was done—if need be—with a cheerful jest on his lips.

"Jackie—*my* Jackie!" she began tremulously. But that was as far as she got, because the five minutes were up and the nurse—the real nurse—came to drive her away.

Is Congress Wrecking Our Army in Misdirected Economy?

America Disarmed

By Herbert B. Mayer

IT IS known that Japan is undertaking a vast program of destroyers, submarines and light cruisers not forbidden by the Washington Limitation of Armaments agreement.

The significance of this program is apparent. With the wrecking of our Army—which I pictured in part in McClure's last month—our Navy is the sole line of defense left to us. Should our fleet fail, for any reason, in some possible future naval encounter in the Pacific, there would be no obstacle to the carrying out of the war plan of the Japanese General Staff, which, as I made clear last month, proposes an easy capture of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands and the establishment there of great Japanese armies poised to move against our Western Coast, should opportunity offer.

In such a case, with bases in the Aleutians and Alaska cutting in half the distance from our shores, Japan would be in position to prevent the dispatch of fleet or army across the Pacific, to recover the Philippines and Guam.

An adequate army could check the Japanese plans at once, merely by providing garrisons sufficiently large to hold our possessions against surprise attack, thus affording us ample time to complete our preparations.

But as it stands, we have no army left. If the Navy fails, we are lost. Meanwhile, realizing the futility of spending $250,000,000 annually for an army which cannot protect us, should we not, in all common sense, agree either to build that army up to a point where it can carry out its mission, or to scrap it altogether and rely for our protection from disaster solely upon the altruism and eternally peaceful intentions of all the other nations of the world?

But have we not the National Guard and the Organized Reserve to help our regulars meet such a possible war crisis? In addition to these, have we not also some millions of veterans, graduated only a few years ago from the stern school of the greatest war in the history of the world?

So far as the veterans are concerned even the most sanguine must admit that three months, at the very least, must elapse before these could be reënlisted in the army, organized, clothed, armed, equipped and given vital "refresh" training, and hence we must eliminate these as a mass from consideration as forces against an army of more than two million which can mobilize in five weeks.

Our Present Armed Forces

TO find the highest possible estimate of all our armed forces we can not do better than scan a statement made by Chairman Madden of the House Appropriations Committee at the time the House voted to expend $250,000,000 on an army which can not fight. In this statement Mr. Madden said:

"Never before has the country possessed so many military resources in trained men and materials. Our Regular Army now has double the number of highly trained commissioned officers it had before the World War and an enlisted strength 25 per cent larger and a far greater military asset to the nation than ever before."

Of the Regular Army of 125,000 not more than 30,000 mobile combat troops can be mobilized in any reasonable time as I showed in my first article by figures of the General Staff. The regular army garrisons abroad are so inadequate as to be helpless if attacked.

If Mr. Madden means that the present establishment is larger than the tiny army of the days preceding the

start of the World War he is correct, but he is in error if he means to imply that the present army is larger than that with which we actually entered the World War, for at that time the Regular force had been brought up to 200,000 men. The old army was more or less a national police force with none of the vast responsibilities of the present army in relation to the citizen forces—the National Guard and Organized Reserve.

Today the Regular Army, under the National Defense Act of 1920, now emasculated by Congress, occupies the position of the keystone in the arch of national defense whose pillars are the National Guard and the Reserve.

The Menace Of Unpreparedness

WE always have been prone to cut down our armed forces after every war, but when the World War ended it appeared for a short time that we were going to take advantage of our late grave and expensive errors of unpreparedness. For, although we were victorious, we had suffered heavily in pocketbook, in pride and—worse—in the deaths of thousands of young men who would not have died had they had training.

Our declaration of war came in April, 1917, but it was not until May 28, 1918 that we first met the enemy in the Battle of Cantigny—a minor offensive action conducted by the Regular First Division. The fighting ended in November, 1918, about six months later and during the period in which we fought our forces engaged in only one major action—the Argonne—for St. Mihiel was a German retreat, ordered in advance and interrupted only by the sagacity of General Pershing in advancing the day for our attack.

To achieve this six months' combat in a year and a half of war, we had wasted billions. We had suffered the great cantonment scandals. We had found out that airplanes, manufactured at great expense had never reached the front. We heard of poor equipment, delayed artillery and half a thousand lesser results of our lack of preparedness.

We also began to realize tardily that the war had not been a vast picnic. Despite the censorship and the splendidly optimistic propaganda which always accompanied it, we found out that nearly 100,000 men had been killed and hundreds of thousands wounded during the time that war was being presented to the public as an enterprise in which "Doughboys" were being fed chocolate by fair Y. M. C. A. lasses between occasional splendid forays in which each man, individually, killed scores of "Huns" and shipped their helmets home.

We found out, too, that our one major engagement—the Argonne—was a massacre of untrained men, who died in clusters, some of them so ignorant of the art of war that they had loaded their cartridges in their rifles with the bullets pointing toward themselves. Well-informed military authorities estimate that with trained troops the Argonne could have been won in a week; as it was that deadly killing of our men lasted over a month. That it was lack of training which caused the heavy losses in new divisions was indicated by the experience of older divisions, trained to the limit, which at a minimum of casualties conquered ground even more difficult than that which had bled the new organizations white.

Training, when all is said and done, implies not only complete familiarity with weapons, formations and equipment, but with all this great and intangible thing, which for want of a better name we call discipline.

Untrained soldiers in the infantry arm huddle together for comfort, making targets for artillery and machine guns; untrained artillery fires upon its own forces and cavalry, and is not only useless, but is, besides, a menace to itself and those around it. Trained officers and soldiers, familiar with their duties, are only slightly shaken by the turmoil and even in the heat of action remember orders, formations, and signals for their execution and as a consequence are able to coördinate the knowledge gained by previous experience into a course of action which will bring about the greatest execution possible upon the enemy at the minimum loss to themselves.

Our shocking record of death and financial disaster in the World War, due to our untrained men and our unprepared condition, brought about the present relation of the Regular Army today to the other forces of which Mr. Madden speaks, as embraced in the National Defense Act.

The Act was framed by our foremost military experts, working in close coöperation with the Military Affairs Committee of the House and Senate. Under its terms the Regular Army was to consist of 280,000 men and an adequate force of officers, and was given the twofold mission of maintaining itself in an effective state and bringing up to standard the National Guard and Organized Reserve.

To accomplish this mission the Regular Army must furnish hundreds of officers and men for actual duty with National Guard and Reserve organizations. Other officers and men are detailed to duty with schools and colleges maintaining the students' corps, to which Mr. Madden refers, and with summer camps training regular organizations—these and other duties heavily drain the active Regular force.

THIS is the second part of an important news article reflecting the views of high military authorities in this country upon our present state of unpreparedness.

In a discussion of this kind a frank presentation of facts is essential. To ignore the worst possibilities of a situation is as foolish as deliberately to precipitate them. Mr. Mayer has no jingo spirit in what he writes. He presents merely facts which army men are compelled by their very profession to take into account constantly, but which the rest of us are prone to ignore.

McCLURE'S publishes the article in the belief that it will come as startling news to every reader. The simple fact is that no American can envisage his country's future intelligently unless he is familiar with the conditions that are here described.

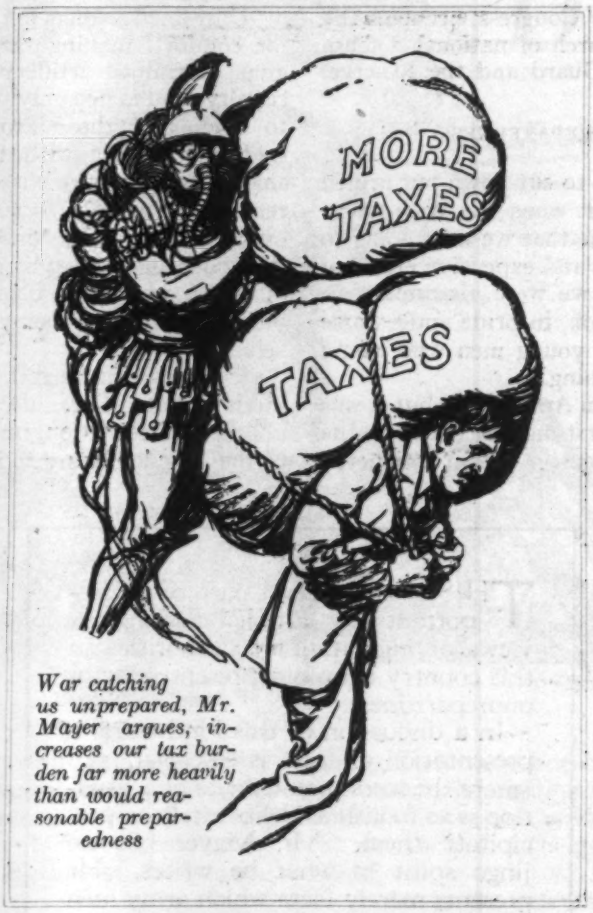
Our Phantom Army

ON account of its reduced condition for months the Regular Army has been unable to do more than make a show of carrying out this ambitious program. Torn by the two duties and unable fully to satisfy either, it has been forced to make a show of doing both and as a result of its lack of strength today the Army itself, the National Guard and the Reserve are in a condition in nowise contemplated by those who framed the National Defense Act—a condition which has forced Secretary of War Weeks to say to Congress: "The time has come for Congress to state anew the mission of the Regular

Army of the U. S., as it stands at the present time."

An instance of the inability of the present Army to give adequate training to the reserve forces is the condition which prevailed at Camp Dix last year when two entire regiments—the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Infantry—practically had to be consolidated in order to furnish one demonstration battalion of four companies. This battalion, one reduced strength troop of cavalry, a skeleton battery of field artillery, two tanks and two squads of engineers were combined to show the students the "art of modern war," as if so pitiful a force could give any idea at all of the vastness of operations involved in even a minor enterprise in modern battle! Significant of the state of training of the Army as a whole, it may be remarked that both these regiments—among the best in the Army—had failed to qualify half their men at target practice although the minimum requirement is eighty per cent.

On account of the shortage of troops absurd scenes were constantly being witnessed at the camps for reserve officers and C. M. T. C. students. Quite often, for example, one lonesome soldier had to be set the task of "outlining" a company at "maneuvers" and on the occasion of the "grand demonstration of an attack by all arms," the combined battalion of infantry was so short-handed that one squad of eight men, in place of the eighty required, formed the "third wave" of the "attack."



War catching us unprepared, Mr. Mayer argues, increases our tax burden far more heavily than would reasonable preparedness

In the attack upon the armed defenses of the nation as a whole, the National Guard has perhaps fared better than most of the other forces. But even so it has by no means had the support required to maintain it at a proper standard and well-informed National Guard authorities today estimate that not more than half of the complete force of 215,000 men is capable of mobilization. From this number—not more than 107,000 men—must come much of the same overhead as relates to the Army itself, which at a liberal estimate would reduce the force by at least 10,000 men, giving us only 97,000 Guardsmen available for immediate mobilization.

The Strength of the Organized Reserve

COMBINED with the 30,000 regulars this brings our potential mobile combat force up to a grand total of 127,000 men. How long could such a force last against a thoroughly trained, armed and equipped force of a million and a half, such as that which Japan can mobilize in five weeks? It would certainly be too small for an expeditionary force! Yet how else could it help in time of need?

What of the other forces of which Mr. Madden speaks, particularly the Organized Reserve? At the present time this consists of exactly 104,000 officers and 1,000 men—a proportion of about 1,000 officers to every soldier. Were it possible immediately to mobilize this organization upon such a basis, we would assuredly find ourselves in the possession of the most unique military establishment on earth.

In time of peace the Organized Reserve is not intended to do more than provide the framework of an army—an outline of the National Army of the World War, whose successor it is. The officers in the Reserve are largely veterans of the World War, who have signified their readiness to serve in any emergency without pay.

However, the plans for the creation of this reserve call for the training of these officers fifteen days a year, but so niggardly have been Congressional appropriations for this purpose that last year in one Corps Area only 500 officers were sent to camp, although more than 15,000 were available. Can Reserve officers keep in touch with the "feel" of command, the new improvements in arms, equipment and in the art of warfare itself under such conditions? They can *not* and as a consequence, although the Reserve is thoroughly organized—on paper—it would take months to perfect its organization with the troops which would be drafted into it. And except for such of its splendid officers as might be assigned to fill gaps in the Regular Commissioned establishment, the other reserve officers could not be counted upon as active, fighting units until their commands were organized, equipped and trained.

The student graduates of training camps—the civilians listed by Mr. Madden as among the armed defenders of the nation—except for 1,000 men who have joined the reserve, actually belong to no force at all. The same is true of the college students. Therefore, what remains as our maximum fighting force, capable of mobilization within a month, is composed of 30,000 Regulars and a National Guard of 97,000.

Lack of appropriations, moreover, has affected not only the military efficiency of the regulars, but practically every matter of their daily lives. For instance, there are at present no adequate funds allotted to the Regular Army for maneuvers, quarters, light or heat. Even forage for the animals has been cut to sixty per cent of the amount authorized by law. Pay has been cut from top to bottom. And because of the reduced pay, nearly two-thirds of the officers in the Regular Army today are in debt and do not know how they are going to get out. And over them hangs always the sword of dismissal and disgrace for "conduct unbecoming," if they fail to satisfy their creditors.

The Plight of Enlisted Men

THE plight of enlisted men is even worse. There have been no promotions in the ranks for more than a year. Privates act as corporals and sergeants, but do not draw the pay to which their responsibilities entitle them. The pay of the private has been cut from thirty

to twenty-one dollars a month and as a consequence the old and trained men are refusing to re-enlist. The non-commissioned officers—those loyal soldiers who have followed the Flag for years—in hundreds of cases are going to suffer a reduction in grade and pay which will make it impossible for them to take care of their families if they remain in the Army.

Despite our shortage of officers, which allows us only one per company instead of three, Congress recently put through an elimination bill, fathered by Representative Anthony of Kansas, which resulted in the further dropping from the army of 1,400 experienced officers at a cost estimated at $36,000,000, this being figured on lost investment for training together with bonuses of one year's pay for all officers of less than ten year's service, and lifetime pensions for those whose service was in excess of ten years.

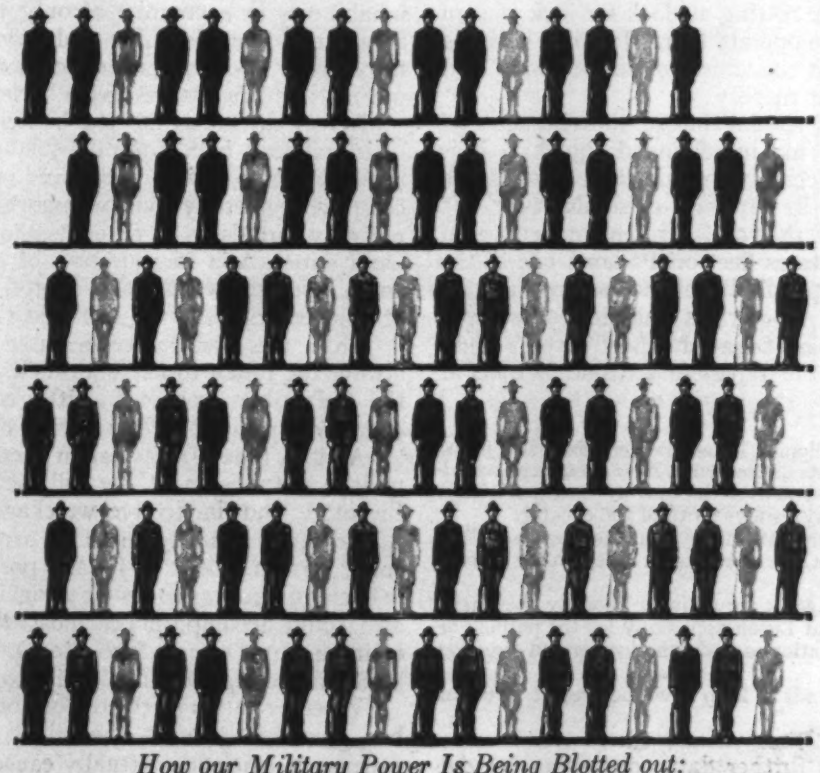
The history of this measure is typical, perhaps, of the character of legislation which has brought the army and its auxiliaries to their present condition. Opposed by every responsible military leader of the country, the measure when first passed through the House rolling machine into a law provided for the elimination of 2,500 officers or practically one fourth of the officers in the Army. A Board appointed under the law proceeded to send out 2,500 notices of discharge.

The Results of the Elimination Bill

MEANWHILE, a storm of protest having arisen, Representative Curry moved an amendment reducing the number to be discharged. This was followed by the virtual admission by Mr. Anthony that he had not known the full extent of his own bill himself, and, offering an amendment of his own, he succeeded in having this combined with the Curry amendment and passed into a law, bringing about an entire change of front on the part of the House within sixty days. The Dickman board, appointed under the previous measure, was thereupon forced to cancel one thousand notices of discharge—weakening the morale of the officers' corps.

Of the 1,400 officers who were eliminated, some 400, like myself, made application for discharge. The remaining officers, without reason, without opportunity to voice objection or protest, found their whole military careers blasted and themselves and their families thrust into new lives by what amounts to a virtual breach of contract of implied life employment pending good behavior which, according to tradition, is made whenever an officer accepts a commission in the Regular Army.

In view of such conditions there is naturally a greatly lowered morale throughout the service, for every officer and man knows that the present army is a wreck, incapable of carrying out its mission or of giving defense in time of need. And worse, there is a distinct feeling that Congress is inimical and the people of the country apathetic—a sorry sensation, indeed, for members of an armed force with traditions as splendid as those of the Regular Army.



How our Military Power Is Being Blotted out:
Of 105 regiments on the Army lists, 37 have been demobilized

Our Unpreparedness vs. Japan's Preparedness

AFTER every war Congress has cut down the Regular Army, and it has followed that the Regular Army always has had to face overwhelming difficulties at the start of every new encounter. But never, in all its long history, will it have faced so impossible a task as will fall to its lot if Japan ever makes use of her present great advantage, due to the fact that she has prepared for war while we scrapped our Army and limited our Navy.

We have one Regular Army division—the Second; and two shadow divisions, the First and Third, which, with our other independent units, give us all told 30,000 men, reënforced by a National Guard of 97,000. Japan has twenty-one regular divisions and twenty-two reserve divisions all capable of mobilization within five weeks.

Armed as she is with this great force, it may be well for us to scan the attitude of the Japanese as reported to our government by reliable observers in a confidential report which sets forth:

> Attitude of Japanese toward U. S. The official Japanese policy is to carry out her own plans, continue on friendly terms with the United States and placate, if possible, where interests conflict. Feeling, however, has been very bitter due to the California situation and the *attitude of the United States on the occupation of the Russian half of Sakhalin.*
>
> Japan advances her demand for equality of races as a mere expedient to draw attention away from her economic ambitions in China. As a matter of fact, the Japanese look down on the white race.

Two things are vital for war purposes, coal and iron, and, according to another document from the same source, we find that Japan has not failed to include possession of these elements in her plans for military preparedness for an emergency.

In line with Japanese strategic expansion is her political victory gained at Versailles, where she was awarded the Caroline Islands as a reward for taking from Germany the fortress of Kiau-Chow for her own use—the only Japanese action of the war. The Caroline Islands cut the Philippines away from us and with these islands fortified—as they now are—Japan can go far toward barring us from recovering the Philippines if ever she chooses to move her three divisions against our garrison of 2,500 white troops.

Only under the most favorable cir-

cumstances, however, could Japan hope to make a direct attack upon our West Coast. Knowing that direct action against the shores of the United States by an invading force is practically impossible, Japan in her political, strategical, tactical and economical movements has been apparently guided by a fixed, inflexible secret policy. So far has the success of this been assured that in the event of war with her, we should now be forced to assume the disadvantages of an attack, with its vastly increased dangers. Today the Japanese would be defenders merely and it would be our convoys, our ships and our men which would have to pay the heavy price of blood for each foot of soil regained or each mile of sea traversed. Japanese strategy would be as simple as that of a boy with a handful of rocks on top of a hill.

Japan's Military Program

THE first phase in such an encounter would be the seizure of the Philippines, Guam and our other Pacific possessions. But far more grave in its potentialities is the second phase which Japan, to all intents and purposes, has planned—the invasion of the Aleutians and Alaska by way of Siberia and Sakhalin, an easy matter in summer if our Navy should fail, or if Japan should accomplish the movement so suddenly as to checkmate our fleet by seizing a moment in the year just before heavy weather started in the North. In such a case the Aleutians and Alaska could be held throughout the winter, at least, and offer bases not only for submarines and airplanes to raid our West Coast, but to offer as well a menace to the safety of our own shores.

With the Regular Army ineffective and its reserves dwindling through Congressional apathy, our one bulwark against the Aleutian-Alaskan invasion is to be found in our Navy. Japan naturally realizes this and has begun to build extensively the classes of ships exempted from the terms of the Limitation of Armaments treaty and has engaged upon a vast aviation program of which little is known. Besides other vessels for war purposes, Japan is building twenty-five new submarines and has made plans for twenty-one more. While our destroyers are rotting at dock for lack of men to man them or funds to operate them, Japan is building six destroyers of the first class and contemplates the construction of twenty-four more.

Japan, moreover, is specializing in the character of war vessel suitable for making flying dashes and it is said that the speed specifications for these vessels are far in advance of those in our ships of similar type. It may be significant, also, that on the recent maneuvers of the combined United States fleet off Panama one of the points stressed was the possibility of success upon a main battle fleet by massed submarines and destroyers.

Another significant confidential report gives a compilation of opinions of the Japanese attitude in the Far East, as follows:

> The location of the Philippine Islands renders possession desirable for Japan. Her interests in the islands have been increased by the acquisition of the Mandate over the near-by Caroline Islands and other former German possessions north of the equator.
>
> In case of war with Japan that country could occupy the Philippines without meeting any organized resistance except in the vicinity of Manila.
>
> Japanese Intelligence Agents are active. Recently they have been investigating landing at Luzon apparently for the purpose or obtaining up-to-date information as to depth of water and direction of current at these points.
>
> Japanese propaganda tends to keep alive the present agitation and unrest in the islands.

A final report gives further data concerning present Japanese increase and reorganization of the vast military establishment which she maintains and which includes just such arms as marked the main features of the strength of the German military establishment.

What does the future hold? No man may say. But should war ever come, so surely as the blade can crash through the upraised arm or shell shatter human flesh just so surely could the Japanese Sixth, Sixteenth and Twelfth Division take the Philippines from our 2,500 garrison. Just so surely should we be swept from the Pacific, save for Hawaii. It appears likely that even the security of our own land would be menaced while we once more went through the horrors of belated preparation with war already upon us. Our tax payers are staggering now from the burdens left by our last negligence. Are they seeking other loads for their weakened shoulders? Are mothers once more willing to send their untrained lads to war to die uselessly when the addition of an infinitesimal tax now—an increase of our protective forces to adequate strength—would effectually hold in check our only potential enemy?

There has been a constant propaganda in this country for the release of the Philippines. Nationally they mean half a world, but to the average citizen they mean little except places on the map which he feels are the source of danger to his country's peace.

If our fleet were defeated, then might well come an invasion from Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, with our hastily mobilized land forces facing not only this attack, but onslaughts from Japanese forces in Lower California.

Some one has said that it is not the fight of might against right which sickens the soul; it is the constant battle between right and right—and indeed such a conflict is at the basis of all those disputes which we have had with Japan, and out of which war may come.

Is It Wise to Remain Disarmed?

ASSUREDLY we have the right to go where we will for trade and to hold the colonies and possessions bought by our blood and treasure. Yet, viewing our Far Eastern incursions through Japanese eyes for the moment, we may consider ourselves as subjects of Japan, inhabitants in a country of only 175,000 square miles, about the size of Maine and having a population of 60,000,000. Poverty is the common lot, biting, gripping poverty; and rice, mixed with barley, the daily meal.

Across the ocean lies the United States, rich beyond belief. There, half of the daily labor we know each day would bring us wealth, peace and opportunity. Yet this country, peopled by those whom we regard as barbarians, not only forbids us to enter its shores, but on the other hand enters Asia for purposes of barter, residence and trade, infringing on our own shores, and having a weapon at our very throats meanwhile in the Philippine Islands.

From this viewpoint does not the temptation exist always for Japan to make a quick, sharp move and take the Philippines from us? Little comment is needed to expose our present danger in view of our unpreparedness.

And so today, with Japan increasing her naval and military establishment, we will spend $250,000,000 upon the inert and ineffective wreckage of our Army. Yet $350,000,000 would give us an army which could fight, could furnish troops to foreign possessions and at home in such numbers as to insure us against attack, and which also could accomplish the most vital thing of all—the training of our reserve forces to a point where they would be available for mobilization in a crisis.

Whether Japan is friendly or not, are we wise to tempt her, particularly when the minor savings made at the expense of efficiency, actually cause us to waste millions on inefficient forces and bring us face to face with—what?

Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

Mr. Tom Hill Finds the Murderer But He Transfers the Reward

By Charles Wesley Sanders

Illustrations by Walter de Maris

I

"LOOK here, Royal," says I, "what did Alice Moore say when you hung up that receiver so quickly?"

"Well," says Royal, kind of slow, "she says Willie drove her home from the store a little after dark, just as we guessed was the case, but——"

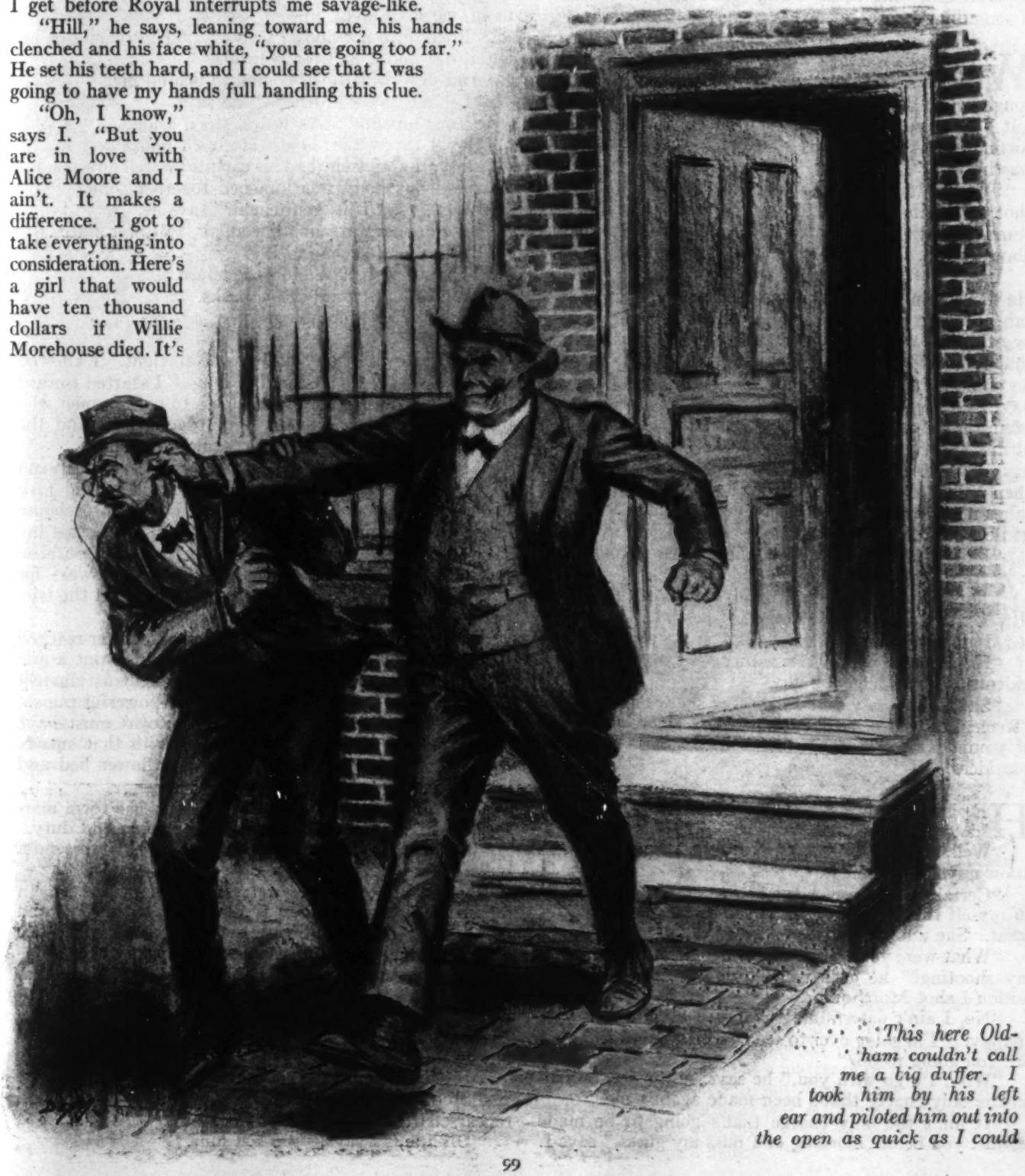
"If she shot him——" I begin, but that is as far as I get before Royal interrupts me savage-like.

"Hill," he says, leaning toward me, his hands clenched and his face white, "you are going too far." He set his teeth hard, and I could see that I was going to have my hands full handling this clue.

"Oh, I know," says I. "But you are in love with Alice Moore and I ain't. It makes a difference. I got to take everything into consideration. Here's a girl that would have ten thousand dollars if Willie Morehouse died. It's a tidy sum. Girls have killed men for less before this."

"If you breathe your suspicions to a living soul——" he begins.

"I ain't going to breathe nothing to nobody, Royal," says I, "but you might as well get it into your head that



This here Oldham couldn't call me a big duffer. I took him by his left ear and piloted him out into the open as quick as I could

your acting ugly ain't what's stopping me. Breathing things promiscuous and lookin' into 'em with your mouth shut is two different propositions altogether."

"Oh, I know I can trust you, Mr. Tom Hill," he mutters.

My phone rang again and I lumbered over and answered the call.

"Is that you, Mr. Tom Hill?" says a girl's voice.

I hadn't heard Alice Moore talk so many times that I was sure it was her voice, but I thought so and I said it was me. She says she is Alice.

"Has anything happened to Willie Morehouse, Mr. Tom Hill?" she asks.

"What makes you think something might have?" I says, quick.

"I had a phone call and the person who called seemed to have something on his mind," she said. "I wondered if something had happened."

WELL, she was just a girl, but she wasn't no timid, shrinking violet. She knew a little about the rough side of life. I never aim to make no girl feel bad, but I am a sworn officer of the law, and it was my duty to find out what I could—sort of strike while the iron was hot.

"Willie Morehouse was murdered in his car to-night—shot to death," says I, sharp and sudden. "I understand you was riding with him. What do you know about it?"

I was watching Royal out of the corner of my eye. He was a ca'm young man as a rule, but them ca'm ones can be hit by hard storms, and, as I expected, this was one time he was hit. He leaped for me. I'm so stout that folks misjudges the reach I've got. My arms ain't no spindling things and they look short. Folks would have said Royal's reach was several inches longer than mine, but 'twas just the other way around. As he jumped at me, I stuck out my right arm and he come up against my fist. He grabbed my arm and tried to push it and then pull it to one side, but when I stick that arm out it takes more'n a tug or two to move it. I held Royal off while Alice Moore answered me.

"I don't know anything about it, Mr. Tom Hill," says Alice, low and steady.

I hung up and took my arm out of action. I thought Royal was going to paste me, but he didn't. He just stood glaring and panting.

"Hill," he says, "that's a nice way to break such hideous news to a young girl."

"She took it easy, like I expected she would," says I. "Remember, Royal Selden, that while I am a good friend of yours, I am also town marshal. I got my duty to consider."

HE glared a minute longer and then he went and sat down.

"Well," he says, "her steadiness shows that she doesn't know anything about it."

"Certainly," I agreed, for his benefit, but I thought to myself that Alice Moore would be steady no matter what. She was that kind of a girl.

"What were you leading up to when you asked about my shooting?" he asks me. "Are *you* entertaining a notion I shot Morehouse?"

"No, I ain't entertaining any such notion," I says, snappy. "I'm going over to see Doc Hickey now. What are you going to do?"

"Why, I'll go with you," he says. "I'm out on bail on the only charge that's been made against me."

"It ain't the only charge that's going to be made against you before morning or I miss my guess," says I.

"Let 'em charge, dammit!" he says. "Come on."

We was getting our hats when there come a knocking at the front door.

"That might be somebody to see you," says I. "Better make yourself scarce."

"Open the door," says he. "I'll face the world."

"Oh, I don't reckon it's the whole world," says I, and I went and opened the door a foot.

Well, it was the same old gang, Morehouse, Brower, and Oldham.

"We want Royal Selden," says Brower, sweet as carbolic acid. "He is here."

"Is he?" says I.

"We expected he would telephone to you or somebody," says Brower. "We went up to the exchange and waited till there was a phone call to Miss Moore and to you. We know Selden is here. If you don't let us in, we shall break in."

"Break into my house?" says I. "That would be an enterprise and a half for you folks!"

And just then Royal comes up behind me.

"Let me speak to them," he says.

"Your funeral," says I, and stood aside.

Royal threw the door wide open and stood in the doorway. I noticed he had his cap pulled well down on his head and his body was hunched together some.

"Well, what is it, gentlemen?" says he.

"We have a warrant for you, sir," Brower states.

"What does it charge?"

"The murder of Willie Morehouse."

"Who swears to it?" Royal asks.

"I do," says Morehouse.

I SEEN Royal's body draw itself all tight. I knowed he was ready for a standing jump. I started toward him to stop him. It's bad business to oppose men who have a warrant for you on a murder charge, and the mayor had the arresting power, same as me.

But I didn't get to Royal in time. He give a leap and was among them men before they could have said Jack Robinson. With a push of each arm he sent Morehouse and Oldham sprawling in opposite directions across my little front yard. I reckoned he give them the push on purpose and saved the next thing for Brower—for Brower was his enemy and was the youngest of the trio, besides.

He set himself quick and hard and as Brower reached for his hip pocket, where I supposed he had put a gun since we'd seen him, Royal flashed his right fist against Brower's jaw—and he packs a pretty powerful punch, I can tell you. Seemed to me like Royal must have broke some of the bones in his hand with that smash. Brower went down in the middle of a flower bed and laid there.

Well, I was Royal's friend, but I was the town marshal, and I had to choose betwixt friendship and duty.

"Stop, Royal Selden," says I, "or I'll have to send a bullet after you."

Well, a bullet travels pretty fast, but by the time a fat man unhitches his gun from a tight hip pocket and gets it trained in the direction a bullet is to go a little bit of time has gone by. And when my gun was pointing toward where a slower man would have been, Royal wasn't there. All I could hear was the clatter of his feet on the sidewalk. And then that stopped, too. I calculated Royal had set up a new record, even for himself.

Morehouse and Oldham got to their feet.

"Stop that man, Hill!" they yelled, like they had rehearsed it.

"Uh-huh," I says, "*you* tell him!"

Royal's story was too bloodcurdling for anything. When he got down to where they was going to shoot the juice into the cringing man in the electric chair, Mike let out a roar

CHAPTER VI—"WELL, WHO?"

PRETTY soon Brower opened his eyes and sat up, and then he looked at me and got to his feet, pretty unsteady.

"I'm going to swear out a warrant against you, Hill," he yells. "You're an accessory after the fact in this murder."

"As how?" says I.

"You harbored a fugitive and permitted him to escape from an officer who had a warrant for his arrest."

"Is that so?" says I. "Well, you're giving me a lot of credit that ain't my due, Brower. I ain't no mind reader. Till you come here, I didn't know you had any warrant for Royal Selden. I arrested him for assault and battery and he made bond. He was as free as the air, so far as I knew."

"You went on his bond," Brower says. "That's how he come to be free. It's a fine situation when the sheriff's the only man in town that'd help him."

"If the fact was known in this here town that Royal had been arrested for pasting you one in the snoot, he could have got a bond for a million dollars," says I. "But if you've really got a warrant for Royal on a charge of murder, let me see it. Then if I run acrost him again, I will have to put him under arrest."

"I'll let you see nothing," Brower snarls.

I knowed he wouldn't, being contrary in anything that I would suggest. That suited me. I couldn't arrest Royal unless I saw the warrant. Doing business with a stubborn, narrow man has its advantages at times.

"Well, there is no use in standing here," says Morehouse. "We better go hunting that fellow."

"Good luck to you, gentlemen," says I. "But remember that you have had a sample of that boy's speed and his hitting power. You better be cautious in your acts."

Brower snorted and they all went down the street to where I see they had parked Morehouse's car. I went indoors and had a cup of coffee. Then I called up old Doc Hickey.

"Where you been?" I says.

"At home all evening," he answers.

"Why didn't you answer your phone earlier?"

"It has been out of order," he says.

"Do you reckon you could drag your old bones down here?" I says. "It's a matter of prime importance."

"I wouldn't drag myself down there to consider a matter that *you* thought was of prime importance, Mr. Tom Hill," says the doc. "We would probably differ on the importance of it."

Doc is always kidding me like that and generally I give it back to him as hot as he sends, though I have to amble some to do it. Now I had the bulge on him without half trying, for I knew from the way he talked that he hadn't heard nothing about Willie Morehouse.

"Oh, I know you're bomb and gas proof," says I, "but would you consider a murder a matter of importance?"

Well, we are not such a big town and we are knit pretty close together. There was scarcely any citizen that doc didn't know from way back, from old Morehouse to the section hands on the railroad.

"What's that?" he says, sharp.

"Willie Morehouse was shot tonight," says I. "That's a fact, doc."

YOU could startle doc some, maybe, but you couldn't knock him out.

"Hum," he says. "I'll be right down there."

I had the coffee good and hot and had made him a couple of ham sandwiches before he got there. He spied them on the dining-room table. Before he asked a question he ate and drank. Then, wiping his lips, he says:

"Shoot, Mr. Tom Hill."

I shot the whole charge.

"Where is the body now?" he asks.

"Down at Bill Treat's undertaking rooms, being prepared for burial," I answers.

"We'll go down there," he says. "My car is outside. Where do you suppose Royal is now?" he asks, on the way.

"Haven't the slightest idea," I says.

"Perfectly asinine thing to accuse that boy," the doc says.

"He's accused by a perfect ass," says I.

"Exactly," the doc booms. "We've got to get Royal out of this, old man."

"Yes, we have," I agreed.

Bill Treat had just got through taking care of poor Willie when we arrived at his place. He looked at us solemn-eyed.

"I want to look at the body, Bill," the doc says.

"Yes, Doctor Hickey," Bill says, respectful. "Just step this way. Would you like to come, Mr. Tom Hill?"

"No," I says, and I stayed in the front of the store and I looked out at the street.

I didn't feel none too good as I stood there. I thought about them three young folks—Willie and Royal and Alice. There was Willie cold in death and there was Royal a fugitive. And there was that young girl with thoughts of her own, I reckoned. And there was poor old Morehouse. Willie wasn't just the kind of boy his father would have had him to be, and yet I knew Abner set great store by him. He was all Abner had, and I guessed that Abner had always been hoping that some day Willie would see something in life besides speeding motor cars.

Apparently Willie had seen something in Alice Moore, but that wouldn't have brought no joy to Abner's heart. The topnotchest of the girls in our town would just have got by with Abner as a wife for Willie. I guessed that Willie's taking out life insurance for Alice had been more than a joke. He must have known that his father would cut him off, like they say. I thought it was pretty good of the boy to have taken steps to make sure that she wouldn't want, if anything happened to him.

I couldn't quite make out about Alice Moore. She must have been in love with Royal. She couldn't have helped herself, I figured; but then she seemed to have jumped at the chance to get herself engaged to Willie. Well, thought I, probably she believed the old man would relent and she would be on easy street, on the shady side. Couldn't blame her none, far as I could see, for she certainly had not had much in her life up to present reading.

Well, presently out comes the doc, thanking Bill Treat over his shoulder, and looking pretty grave. We got into his car and he drove back to my house.

"I'll have another cup of that excellent coffee, Mr. Tom Hill," he says, inside my house.

I got it for him and he sat sipping it.

"Royal kept his pistol in his car?" he said at length.

"Yep."

"Somebody could have stolen it and thrown it where it was found," says doc.

"Yep," I says again.

"OF course you and I know that Royal didn't commit this crime," he says. "Royal isn't that kind. If he was going to do anything to a man, he'd be more likely to do it under an electric light than in the dark."

"Which was about what he threatened to do to Willie," I says.

"A man who meditates murder doesn't threaten, as a rule—not calculated murder," says the doc.

THE STORY FROM THE BEGINNING

WHEN Mr. Tom Hill, sheriff, learns that Willie Morehouse, son of the small town's bank president, has been murdered while driving in his car he is puzzled to account for the deed since he feels sure that the boy had no enemies. But when, later on, Royal Selden, editor of the local newspaper and a youth who is as "clean as a hound's tooth," is under suspicion, he is even more concerned.

Abner Morehouse, Willie's father, offers five thousand dollars reward for the capture of the murderer—despite the sheriff's protest—finally increasing the amount to ten thousand dollars at the suggestion of Doctor Oldham and with the approval of Mayor Brower, two men for whom Mr. Tom Hill entertains a lively dislike.

Though the sheriff is convinced of Selden's innocence, he realizes that things look bad for him, since he and Willie Morehouse had been in love with the same girl—Alice Moore. In fact, Willie had recently taken out ten thousand dollars worth of insurance for her, and, apparently, the girl had promised to marry him. Then Hill goes to see Selden, who confesses that Alice had refused him and that he had quarreled with Morehouse about her.

Selden and the sheriff go to the scene of the crime to find Morehouse and his companions already there. They have found a pistol which Selden admits belongs to him. Finally, in a moment of anger at the mayor's taunts, Selden hits him. Brower demands that Selden be arrested for assault and battery—and the sheriff consents to lock him up. But when the irate trio arrive at the jail later on, they find that Selden has been released on bail.

At dawn Selden comes to Mr. Tom Hill's home, and, in discussing the case, a sudden startling thought occurs to both of them: Perhaps Alice Moore had been in the car with Willie Morehouse on the fatal evening. Royal telephones the girl and is manifestly troubled when he turns again to the sheriff, to say, grimly: "She was with him, all right."

"Would Alice Moore have shot Willie?" I asked.

"Not she," the doc answers. "No, sir. I know that girl. There is a lot to her. She has something of an inferiority complex, but that wouldn't lead her to commit murder."

I had to have doc spell them two words before I got an inkling of what they was and then I didn't know what they meant till he explained.

"Well, it isn't exactly an inferiority complex," he says. "She doesn't really believe she is inferior to the general run. In fact, she feels that she is better than some because she has hoed a harder row than most girls have to hoe to get the education she has got. But she thinks that people think she's inferior and that breeds pride in her. It breeds a fierce haughtiness. She goes about with a chip on her shoulder. Understand?"

"About the chip stuff, yes. But if she's so fierce and prideful and haughty, why the dickens didn't she marry Royal? Seems like she thinks he's too good for her."

"Oh, a girl in love as she must be with Royal!" doc cries, and raises his hands as much as to say that all bets is off under them circumstances, and I reckon they are.

"Well," says I, "would it be violating any professional confidence if you give me just a little hint as to what you found out by your examination?"

"We can reconstruct the thing," says doc, pulling at his nose like he had a habit of doing when he was thinking deep. "Willie was speeding in his car and——"

"Who says he was speeding?" says I.

Doc gives me look, squinting.

"A good point," says he. "Makes it all the more plausible. I said speeding because he was usually speeding. Well, Willie was driving his car. He was sitting squared away in front of the wheel as he always was, for in spite of his speeding, or maybe because of it, Willie was a good, careful driver. Well, he was sitting like that and somebody at the roadside shot him through the heart."

DOC didn't fool me none. I knowed he was what I've heard Royal call derisive. He was trying to kid me and make me guess. But I didn't let on.

"That's just exactly it, doc," says I.

"Yes, you bonehead," doc says. "That's just exactly it. Well, the man at the roadside must have been able to shoot around a corner. I don't believe even Royal Selden could do that."

"I don't think that kind of a gun has been invented, neither," says I. "Do you want me to plead with you to tell me what you're driving at?"

"Why," says doc, "Willie was shot from in front. The bullet entered the chest just over the heart."

My thoughts scampered off to Alice Moore, the while I stared at doc.

"It wa'n't no roadside shooting, then," says I. "Was it done by somebody in the car with Willie?"

"Two things ought to be looked into," the doc says. "First, were there any powder stains on Willie's clothing? That would show how close the pistol was to his chest. Second, was there a bullet hole in the wind shield?"

"There's forty-'leven holes in the wind shield," says I. "It was smashed to smithereens."

"We'll go and have a look at the clothing," says doc. "Call up Morehouse. I don't reckon he's sleeping."

It was now two o'clock in the morning, but Morehouse answered the phone prompt. His voice was husky and low. I knowed what he had been doing—pacing up and down in the parlor of his big house, all alone, eating his heart out, the while he waited for the dawn to come and bring what was left of his son back to him. Poor Abner!

"This is Tom Hill," says I. "Doc Hickey is here at my house now and he would like to come up and see you."

"Let him!" Abner snaps. "It's about time I heard from him."

I reported back to the doc and we got into his car again. I begun to run things over in my mind as we drove along. It was maybe funny that a thing that might be considered of no importance bobbed up in my mind. I half turned in the seat.

"Doc," says I, "how's it come that your phone was out of order in the evening and then come all right?"

"It didn't come all right," doc answers. "I had a lineman come up and fix it."

"Oh," I says, "something in the instrument, eh?"

I see doc's lips kind of curl up in a thin little smile.

"Not in the instrument," he says, "in the wire. The wire outside my house was cut."

I stared at him some more, like I had done at the house.

"Who wanted to shut you off from the outside world?" I asks.

Doc smiled again, that frosty old smile of his.

"Well, who?" says he.

Chapter VII—His House in Order

WELL, here was mystery piled atop mystery, for a fact. I knowed that the folks that would want to cut Doc Hickey off from the outside world was in a minority that wouldn't be able to muster more'n a vote or two.

"There's only one way to figure this thing, doc," says I, after what for me was some pretty deep thinking.

"And how is that?" doc asks.

"Why, the cutting of your phone wire is connected up in some way with the shooting of Willie Morehouse," says I.

He looked straight ahead and I seen his jaw get hard.

"Yes," he says, "I believe it is. And I want to tell you that I'm going to find out who did it."

That was good news from the front. I knowed doc couldn't rest till that part of the mystery was cleared up, and that part might lead plumb into the main part. Doc was as gentle and kind as could be in a case of sickness, but he was a hell-bender when you got him riled.

"More power to your good right arm," says I, and we didn't say no more till we got to Morehouse's.

Abner opened the door for us his own self.

"Why the devil weren't you on the job tonight, Hickey, so that you could have examined my boy after he was shot?" Abner asks, when we were inside the house.

"Somebody cut my phone wire," says doc, with acid in his voice. "However, I have examined your boy."

"What did you discover?"

"THAT he was shot—probably through the heart," doc answers, and he give me a look to say that that was sufficient information for Abner for the time being.

"Do you suspect anybody?" Abner asks.

"I never suspect," says doc. "I'd like to examine Willie's clothing, if I may."

"I'll get it," Abner says.

He went out and come back with Willie's clothes in his shaking hands. Doc took them from him and looked them all over. Then he folded them up and took them out in the hall, so Abner wouldn't have to handle them again till they was put away.

"Well?" says Abner.

"I was looking for powder marks," doc says. "I don't see any. Of course there is so much blood that the marks might have been obliterated."

"Why do you look for powder marks?" Abner asks.

"To see how close the gun was to Willie," doc answers.

"Why, Willie was shot from the roadside," says Abner. "There wouldn't be any powder marks. Royal Selden shot him. Selden's pistol was found. He was in the vicinity."

"Abner," says doc, "did you ever stop to think that a sane, honorable, high-minded man doesn't commit murder unless some terrible calamity unseats his reason or he is driven to desperation by some act of the man he murders?"

"You speak of an honorable man!" Abner sneers. "I am speaking of this Selden person."

"And you are speaking out of your dislike for him," says doc. "Just because he has refused to kowtow to you on account of your being the money king of this town, you don't like him. Why, if you were reasoning clearly, you would know that Royal's bucking you was something in his favor. It takes courage for a newspaper publisher to buck the money power."

"It takes courage to kill a man, too!" Abner snaps.

"A DIFFERENT kind of courage, Abner," doc says. "Why, if Royal was low enough to commit murder, he certainly would be low enough to curry favor with you and your crowd, and feather his nest. However, let that go. Have you found out anything about your son since the murder?"

That seemed to drive Royal out of Abner's mind.

"I've been going through Willie's papers," he says. "I have found a number of things. Willie had come to his senses at last, as I knew he would if he were given time. He had begun to set his house in order, and his pride was so fine a thing that he didn't tell me he was doing it. He wanted to surprise me, I guess."

"Would you mind telling us what you found?" doc asks.

"I'll tell you," Abner says, pride shining in his own face. "Willie's mother left him some stock in one of the big electric companies. It was his stock and I supposed he had sold it long ago. I now discover that he sold it only in the last few days. He received four thousand dollars for it. I find by a book which was in his desk that he deposited the money in my bank, though he said nothing to me about that, either. He just took the money to the teller and deposited it.

"Also I find that Willie was seeking to make a connection with an automobile company in the city. Willie knew automobiles. He could take any car to pieces and put it together again. He would have made an excellent salesman or he could have become an expert mechanic. I imagine he offered himself in either capacity, for there is a letter among his papers from the general manager of the company, and he says that he wants Willie to tell him a little more about himself. Oh, God," says Abner Morehouse, "to think he should have come to the state of mind I prayed for in him and then should have been murdered!"

Well, I turned away from Abner. I couldn't bear to look at his face just then.

"HOW did you happen to increase the amount of the reward between the time Mr. Tom Hill was here and the time you phoned your ad to Royal, Abner?" doc asks, after a pause.

"Doctor Oldham suggested the increase," Abner says. "He said that it would stir up everybody to go to work on the case, and of course that is quite true. Now, I don't want you to let your professional jealousy get the better of you, Doctor Hickey. I don't want you to go jumping at conclusions about Doctor Oldham. He holds the same opinion that you do about Selden. He says he thinks Selden too clean to have killed Willie."

"That didn't stop him from telling how he saw Royal on the road," says doc.

"Would you have the man keep important information like that to himself?" Abner asks.

"Well, he needn't have been so previous with it," doc sneers.

"You don't like Oldham, Hickey. That's why you're talking this way."

"Don't like him?" doc busts out. "Well, I guess not! I despise him!"

"Then you are not capable of sitting in judgment on him," Abner says, and I had to confess to myself that there was justice in that. "You tell me I am prejudiced against Selden. In like measure, you are prejudiced against Oldham."

Doc sits for a while, staring at the carpet. If ever a just man lived, it was this same Doc Hickey, and I could see now that he was weighing something in his mind. Finally he looked up.

"Abner," he says, "there is something I think I should tell you. But I want you to understand that I am merely giving you some information I have."

"What is it?" says Abner.

"Your son was engaged to marry Miss Alice Moore," says doc.

I expected Abner to be struck in a heap, but he wasn't. He just flung up his head and he give a kind of a laugh.

"My son was fond of his joke," says he. "If he was engaged to the Moore girl, it was what might be termed a summer-vacation engagement. He meant it for a joke; she must have known he meant it for a joke."

"It is no joke," says doc, solemn. "Willie told Dobbins, when he took out the insurance, that he and Alice were engaged."

ABNER seemed about to reply in the same high, scoffing way, but then he seemed to have another thought.

"Let us start from here," says he. "Willie took out insurance in the Moore girl's favor. We will concede, for the moment, that they were engaged to be married. Is there evidence that the girl was in love with my son?"

"There is evidence to the contrary," I had to say.

"Good enough," says Abner. "And what were the relations of Royal Selden and this girl?"

"Royal Selden was in love with Miss Moore and proud of it," says I.

"And the girl with him?" asks Abner.

"I reckon so."

"Willie is gone," says Abner, low. "He can never marry this girl. But the insurance money remains and Royal Selden remains. There's the situation. There's the motive. There's everything! Royal Selden was near the scene of the crime. His pistol was found there. It's a perfect case at last. It needed only what you told me, Hickey, to make everything clear to me."

"You think Royal killed Willie, so that he could marry the girl and enjoy the insurance money?" says I.

"I happen to know that Selden needs money," says Abner. "He was at the bank trying to get some a month ago."

"Shucks," says I, "Royal is figuring on buying a new press. That's all there is to that. He ain't hard up for money, but he ain't got enough to buy the press. He could get time on it, but he would rather borrow the money and pay cash. He has got good security. Why didn't you let him have the loan, Abner?"

"Because I didn't wish to," Abner says, haughty. "Well, it looks now as if Selden would get some money.

I'll wager he marries this girl within the month—if he is outside of prison."

I was getting enough of that kind of talk and I made a move to get off my chair. Doc held up his hand.

"Just a minute, Mr. Tom Hill," he says. He turned to Abner. "Abner," he says, "I don't wish to intrude, but do you think you have found all of Willie's papers?"

"There is nothing more in his desk in his room," Abner says, kind of startled. "Why?"

"I was going to speak of it before, but it seemed none of my business," the old doc says. "When I was examining Willie's coat, I felt a thick envelope in the inside pocket."

"He may have had a contract or further correspondence from the automobile people," Abner says. "I'll get the envelope—if there is one."

Up comes her arm and in the sunlight that was streaming through the door, a pistol glittered in her hand

He started for the door. And a moment later, sure enough, he comes back with a thick envelope in his hands.

"Why, it just has 'William Morehouse' written on the outside," he says. "It's Willie's handwriting. Perhaps there are letters inside."

Chapter VIII—Toward Manhood

HE opened the envelope and his hands shook again. Then he took from it a single sheet of paper. He opened it and read it through. His face was white and when he had finished, he gives a kind of choky gasp.

"What is it, Abner?" says doc, kind.

For answer Abner holds the paper out to doc. Doc takes it and beckons to me to look over his shoulder.

The paper was Willie's will. He left everything—including his money in the bank, his insurance, and his car—to Alice Moore.

"What's your analysis now?" doc asks, after a while.

"Why, Selden and the girl were after Willie's money," says Abner. "It was all a plot. The girl never intended to marry Willie. She waited till the will was made and then Selden killed my boy." He stopped and looked at doc.

"You really think that Selden would do a thing like that?" doc asks. "You think that for a few thousand dollars he would change from the man he has always been to a criminal? You think that he would make a conspiring criminal out of the girl he cared for? Abner, you're crazy!"

"If he could kill a man, he wouldn't be capable of caring what kind of woman he married or what he dragged her down to," Abner snapped.

"As logic, that's superb," doc sneers back. "Well, what are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to see that Moore girl and tell her that she will inherit what Willie left after I have spent all I possess in a lawsuit to stop her," Abner said. "I'll see her this morning."

"I imagine that Alice Moore hasn't slept any more than the rest of us," doc says. "I imagine she is up now. I'll call her and see."

"You'll not call her," Abner declares, spiteful as can be. "You'll not give her a warning. When I see her, I'll take her off her guard."

"You'll pounce on her?" doc says, hot.

"You can label it that if you want to," Abner got back at him.

Doc walked up to the window and looked out.

"It's breaking day," says he. "I'm going down to see Miss Moore right now. I'm going to tell her what is in your mind—about the suit and all. The girl has hoed a hard row. I'm not going to let you bulldoze her, Morehouse."

"Who's talking about bulldozing her," Abner flared out. "What right have you to mix in, anyhow? I'll attend to my own business."

Doc goes hard and cold and stiff as he faces Morehouse.

"And I'll attend to Miss Moore's business," he snaps.

Them two old men stood glaring at each other for a minute, like they was going to fly at each other's throats. Then doc unbent a little. I reckon he remembered that Abner had just lost his only son.

"Suppose we go down together and see her, Abner," he says.

Abner started to flare some more, but his lips begun to quiver. He and doc had been friends for many years, except when they had parted over support of Brower in the election. A man suffering like Abner was can be got to by a kind word, throwed out sudden.

"I'll go with you," Abner says, "but I don't want you butting in."

"Will you let the girl tell her story if she is willing to —let her tell it first?" says doc.

"Oh, she can talk if she wants to," says Abner. "But it will have no effect on me. I've made up my mind about her. Any girl that will marry a man for his money. Pooh!"

"Come along, Mr. Tom Hill," doc says, and we all got into his car.

DOC drove down across the railroad tracks to the mean section that the Moores lived in. He had guessed right about Alice Moore not being abed. She was standing in the front door as we drove up, kind of drooping against the jamb. I noticed that she was looking pale.

As we come up the path to the door, she raised her head and looked at Abner. I saw her eyes were very mournful and kind of red, like she had been crying. When she caught Abner's eyes, her hand went creeping up over her heart and stayed there.

"We'd like to speak to you, Alice," says doc.

"Come in," says Alice, and I had to give her a good mark for not being ashamed to take old Abner right into the midst of her poverty.

We went in and set down. I had to sit on an old battered sofa, because there wasn't enough chairs to go round.

Alice sat by the window and the early morning light come in on her pretty hair. She looked at Abner all the time, but Abner's eyes was going round the poor old room. When they come to rest on her face at last, I see that they was hard and bitter. They as much as said that a girl living in a place like this would grab at a chance to marry *his* son.

"Alice," says doc, "we have come to give you a chance to tell us about your engagement to Willie Morehouse. Of course you don't need to tell us anything if you don't want to."

Alice's eyes come round slow to doc's face.

"I will tell you what little there is to tell, Doctor Hickey," says she. "What do you want to know first?"

"We want to know how you came to lure my son into an engagement," Abner snaps.

SHE come round to him with that slow, soft, gentle movement.

"I didn't lure him, Mr. Morehouse," she said, low. "He rather forced his acquaintance on me in the first place. I went riding with him a few times. I know I shouldn't have done that, but he was persistent. About that time I wasn't very clear in my own mind about how I felt about anything."

"May I ask what caused that confusion of mind?" Abner sneers.

"You may ask," says Alice, "but I won't tell you." She give him a swift, keen look in the eye.

"I didn't expect you would," Abner says, nasty as he could. "However, I will tell you that——"

"Just a minute, Abner," says doc. "Give Alice her chance." Then he turns to her and asks: "Did you care anything about Willie, Alice?"

"I didn't love him, if that is what you mean, Doctor Hickey," she says. "I liked him. He was a very generous, very nice boy."

"Oh, he was generous!" Abner busts in.

"If you didn't love him, why did you promise to marry him?" doc asks.

"I can't explain all of that," says Alice. "But it would have been a good marriage for me, wouldn't it? Almost any girl in town would have been glad to marry Willie Morehouse."

"Exactly!" Abner pops out. "Well, I tell you——"

"You wanted relief from all this, Alice?" doc asks, waving a hand to take in the poor room.

"I could have escaped this before," says Alice.

"You knew Willie had made out insurance to you?" says Abner.

She nods, looking straight at him.

"That he had sold some stock and put the money in the bank?"

Another nod.

"That he was looking for a job?"

Up and down goes the pretty head.

Abner leans forward in his chair, clutching his bony knees.

"Finally," says he, "you knew that my son had made a will leaving everything to you?"

"Yes," says Alice Moore.

Abner leans back in his chair, letting go of his knees. He looks at doc very triumphy.

"But of course, Alice," says doc, gentle, "you don't know anything at all about the murder of Willie Morehouse."

Alice's color come back into her cheeks on the run.

"Of course not!" she says.

"Will you deny that you love Royal Selden?" Abner barks.

The color drops out of her cheeks.

"There are some things, Mr. Morehouse," says Alice, "that are too sacred to talk about."

HER head went up in the air. Her eyes sparked. She looked queeny. Right there I says to myself that I am backing her to the limit. Old Abner ain't only on the wrong track. He is on the wrong railroad line.

"I give you warning now——" he begins, heedless, but Alice won't let him finish.

"Warning, Mr. Morehouse?" she says. "Why, there is nothing you need warn me about. I entreated your son not to take out that insurance. I urged him not to make a will in my favor. I only told him to get a good job and then I would marry him. He cared for me greatly. I thought I could make a man out of him—something, sir, which you failed to do. Of course I cannot accept that insurance. I can take nothing of what belonged to your son. It would be preposterous. I was not his wife. I am entitled to nothing."

Abner's breath come hissing out till his chest was flat as a pancake. He couldn't speak. Doc glowed like an electric light.

"Good girl!" says I.

Then there was a movement at the door that led into the kitchen. Old Mike Moore come there and stood peering in with his red eyes, and his jaw was stuck out.

"She'll take whatever is coming to her," Old Mike says. "There ain't no law that can keep it from her. If she don't take it, I will."

He wagged his head and his eyes glittered, for Mike was a money lover if ever one lived. Then up among the figures that had so far appeared in this here drama rose, in my mind, the figure of old Mike Moore. And it was, like they say, a figure that was sinister.

But I wasn't going to let him know how I felt. Before the doc or Morehouse could say anything, I spoke up. I knowed Alice would say nothing; she just set there looking kind of scornful.

"Howdy, Mike," says I. "Walk right in and make yourself to home!"

"I don't need no invitation from you to walk in, in this here house, Tom Hill," he says. "In fact, I don't know as you yourself are getting any warm welcome here."

"And don't need none," says I. "I'm here as town marshal, Mr. Moore."

"You can take yourself off!" he snarls.

"All in good time," says I, squaring around in my chair and giving him one of these here withering looks. "Moore," says I, "did you know about this will and insurance and all?"

"You're bringing your questions to a poor market when you bring them here," Mike states.

"There's another market handy," says I. "How about it, Miss Alice? I call your attention to the fact that Royal Selden is at present a fugitive from justice, charged with the murder of William Morehouse."

Chapter IX—"Not Really!"

I RECKON Mike didn't think I'd play that trump card. Maybe he didn't know that I knew I had it. Well, I can be trusted to play my hand for what it is worth.

Alice shifted in her chair and wet her red lips with the tip of her tongue, like they had suddenly gone dry. I waited patient.

"You can take your questions——" Mike begins.

"Yes," says Alice, "my father knew all about it."

Her voice was kind of low and far away. She had twisted her hands together in her lap. She was caught betwixt two things—her love for Royal Selden and whatever her feeling for her father was.

"Mike," says I, "I'm going to search your house."

Mike's house had only four rooms. There was the room we was in, the kitchen in the rear of it, a bedroom on each side of it. One bedroom was Alice's; the other was Mike's. When I told Mike I was going to search his house, he hopped in front of the door of what I judged was his bedroom.

"You make one move to search this house and I'll blow your head off!" he says.

"Oh, ho," says I, "you own a gun, do you? Well, that's what I thought and that's what I'm looking for."

I got up and made a lunge toward him all in one movement. He is little and wiry and he was through the door and into the room by the time I reached the door. He run to a battered dresser that stood in the corner of the room and yanked at a drawer. Luck was with me, for the drawer stuck. I had him by the nap of the neck before he could give a hard enough yank and I throwed him back on the bed. It wasn't no great job for me to get the drawer open.

THERE was a conglomeration of stuff in it, and I felt around among this till I come to what I was looking for. It was a pistol—an automatic almost like Royal Selden's. Mike couldn't have had it very long, for it was shiny and not a brack in it. I took a look at the cartridges. They was all new, too. Then I examined the barrel. My guess was that that gun had been fired at least once or twice.

Mike had got up from the bed by this time and he was pulling at my arm, trying to swing me around so's he could grab at the pistol. He didn't swing me. I guess maybe I don't swing none too easy, mostly.

"Come out in the other room, Mike," says I; and I took him by the nap of the neck again and shoved him ahead of me. Then I plumped him down in a chair and stood over him.

"Where'd you get the nice little gun, Mike?" says I.

"I bought it of course, you fool!" he says.

"When?"

"None of your business."

"When'd he buy the gun, Alice?" says I.

Alice looked like she had kind of gone into a trance. She was sitting as still as a listening mouse and looking straight ahead of her.

"He bought it last Saturday," she says.

"At that time," says I, "he knew about the will and the insurance?"

"He knew."

"Did he ever own a gun before he bought this one?"

"I never saw him have one."

"You vixen!" Mike broke in.

"Oh, father!" says Alice, kind of piteous, for to girls fathers is fathers, no matter what.

"When did you fire this gun, Mike?" I asks.

"I been shooting rats with it," he answers.

"He been shooting rats, Miss Alice?" I says. "Do you have rats round here?"

"Oh, we have rats," says Alice, rousing a little in a kind of scorn. "You'd think we would have, wouldn't you, in a house like this?"

"Did he shoot any rats?"

"When he came home Saturday evening, he was shooting at one," she says.

"Didn't he hit it?" says I, anxious, for this was more important than it looked.

"No," says Alice. "He fired fast. I don't know how that pistol works, but the bullets just flew in a stream, it seemed. He couldn't hit the rat."

"How far was he from it?"

"Not more than five feet. It was outside at the corner of the coal house. The rat ran from one side while my father was standing there watching. Father began to fire and the rat dodged from side to side, trying to find a hole at that particular place."

"And with that elegant chance, he couldn't hit the rat at five feet?" says I.

"No; his hand wasn't steady."

WELL, that didn't look so good. A man who couldn't hit a rat at five feet when he was laying down a barrage from an automatic would have some difficulty putting a bullet into the heart of another man in an automobile. Unless, by heck, he was lucky! You got to figure that element of luck. As Royal had said, the bullet would have to go some place and it might go into its target.

I sat looking at Mike, casting about for another opening, and finally I got hold of a fair little idea.

"Last night Willie Morehouse brought you home in his car, did he, Alice?" I asks.

"Yes," she says.

"And your father was here?"

That shot went straight into the bull's-eye.

Alice squirmed in her chair, coming out of her trance. Mike leaned forward in his, his lips working for a minute before his words would come. Then he popped out:

"I'll not allow my daughter to answer no more questions. You get to the devil out of here, Hill!"

"Strong language, Mike," says I, folding my hands and twiddling my thumbs.

"He—he wasn't here," Alice says.

"How long before he come in?"

Mike hops from his chair and makes a lunge across the room at me. I received him with open arms, picked him up, and squatted him down in his chair, hard.

"Moore," says I, "if you try that again I'll put the bracelets on you. I got 'em right here in my pocket. Be still now! Please go ahead, Alice. Let's get done with this."

ALICE comes through fast then, like she wanted to be shut of the whole business all at once.

"He came in some time after nine o'clock," she says. "He was in a hurry. He went into his bedroom and came out again in a minute and left the house. I—I was afraid. I went into the bedroom and found the pistol in the bureau drawer, where I knew he was keeping it. It was empty. He was gone for about an hour, and then he came home and went to bed," she ended, breathless.

"Where'd you spend that hour, Mike?" says I.

"In Hall's poolroom," he answers, and he adds quickly: "I can prove it."

"Where'd you spend the time between seven o'clock and after nine, say?" I inquires.

"I was around town."

"Name one place."

"I won't do it," says he.

I sat looking at him for a space. Nobody moved; nobody spoke. At first Mike wouldn't look at me. Then slowly his eyes come round to mine. That's where I wanted them to be.

"Mike Moore," says I, impressive as possible, "I arrest you for the murder of William Morehouse."

He let out a scream, bloodcurdling, pitched high. He flung himself at me again, only this time it was along the floor on his knees.

"Mr. Tom Hill, I didn't do it!" he yells, his voice crackling. "Not really. Not really!"

I PUT my hand on his shoulder heavy and raised him to his feet, getting to my feet my own self at the same time.

"What do you mean," says I, stern, "what do you mean by 'not really, not really'? Willie is dead. If you killed him, you really killed him. What is this 'not really' that you are getting off?"

"Not really," Mike mumbles.

"Come along with me," says I.

I wanted to get him behind bars where I could watch him and I pushed him toward the door. He was shaking like he had the ague. As I passed Alice, I seen her start to sway in her chair. I caught her with my free arm just as she started to slump to the floor in a dead faint.

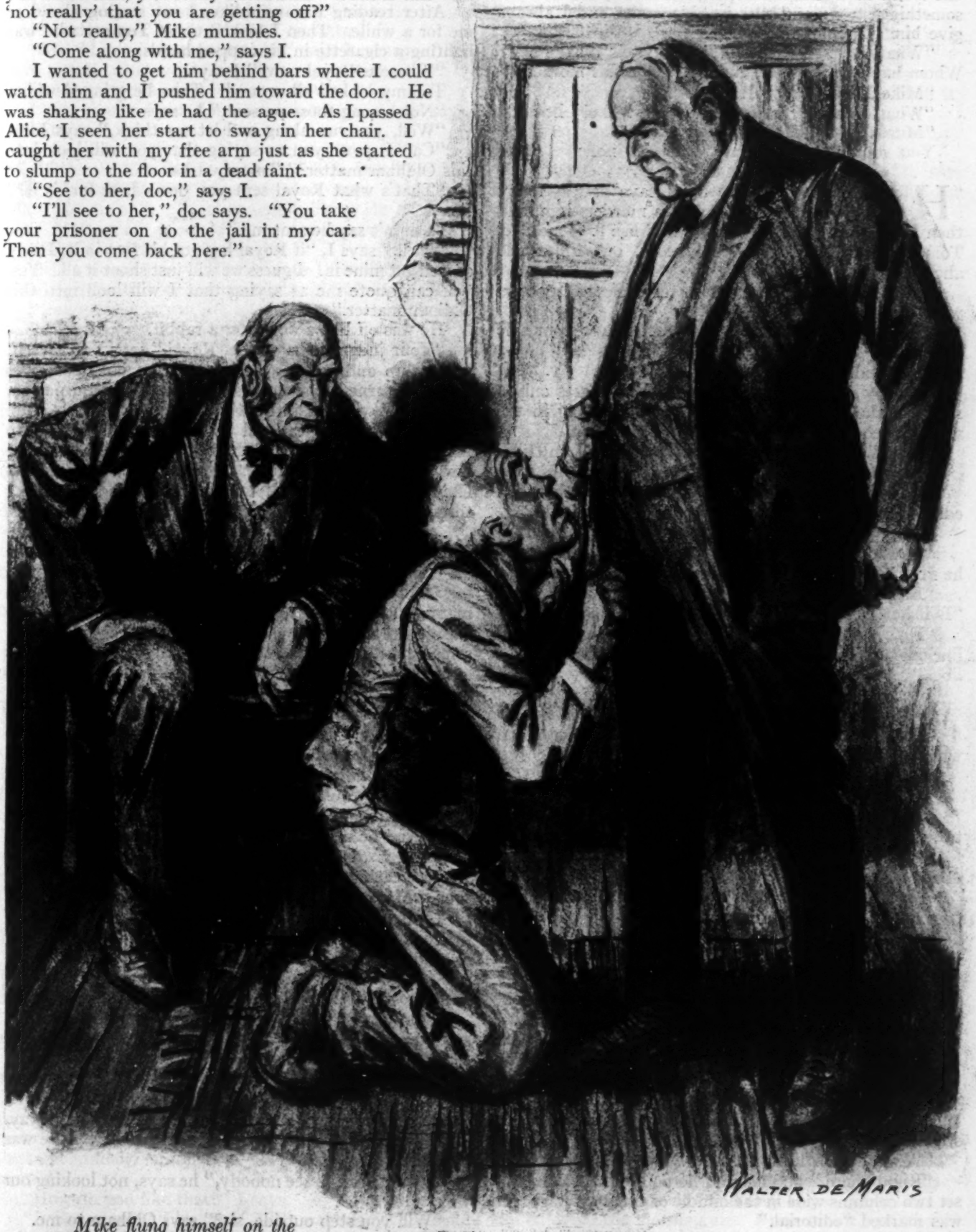
"See to her, doc," says I.

"I'll see to her," doc says. "You take your prisoner on to the jail in my car. Then you come back here."

Me and Morehouse drove to the jail and I put Mike inside.

"I'll stay here," says I. "You go back to doc. I want to see how Mike acts."

Morehouse drove away. He was some subdued. I don't know as I ever see a bank president quite so meek. I sat down in a corner across from Mike's cell. Mike had



Mike flung himself on the floor on his knees. "Mr. Tom Hill," he yells, "I didn't do it! Not really. Not really!"

sank down on the bunk, dejected, his face in his hands.

By now the sunlight was flooding into the jail. I was beginning to get hungry, but I knowed I had better stick around with Mike for a while. If the iron got hot, I had to be there to strike it.

In a few minutes in comes Tommy Morton, one of Royal Selden's reporters. Tommy was an impudent, pug-nosed, freckled-faced lad, always with his cap over one eye and a cigarette drooping from his lip. There was something strong and sure in his manner and I always give him what news I had.

"What, ho, Mr. Tom Hill!" he says. "What's new? Whom have you got in your sun parlor this morning?"

"Mike Moore," says I.

"What does the blotter show about Mike?" he asks.

"Murder of William Morehouse."

You couldn't startle that youngster none.

"HUH," he says, "Willie must have had as many lives as a cat. First my boss murders him, and then Mike Moore murders him. Well, lisp it to me, Mr. Tom Hill. It's probably all libelous, but I'll decide about that."

I told him what there was to tell. He gets up and walks over to see Mike.

"Heads up, Miko," he says. "Let's have your side of this."

"Not really, not really," says Mike.

The boy plies Mike with questions, but gets only a shake of the head, many of the shakes coming in the wrong place to mean no.

"Nuts," says the boy. "Off his bean, Mr. Tom Hill."

"Shook up some," says I.

"Well, I must get back and write this for the noon edition," he says, and starts off.

"Hey," says I, "have you got out one edition already?"

"It was being escorted to bed when I left the shop," he says.

"Bring me a paper when you come back," I says. "Is it hot?"

"Hot, Mr. Tom Hill?" he says. "Say if that rag ain't libelous this morning, there ain't no such animal as libel."

He moves on again.

"Hey," I says, "who got out the paper?"

"It got itself out," he answers. "The copy was all written when I hit the shop."

"Where's Royal?" I says.

"Royal who?"

"Why, Royal Selden, you poor fish!" says I. "I want to see him."

"Not really?" he says and skips on, leaving a thin trail of cigarette smoke behind him.

Chapter X—Mike Reads

HE was back in an hour with a paper for me. Mike had sat with his head in his hands all the time. I was still waiting for him to come out with something.

I took the paper and spread it out. Big type told about the murder of Willie and the charge against Royal. I thought it was funny that Royal's paper should be speaking about him like he was somebody else. There was a short article in black type about the finding of the gun. Whoever had wrote it had seemed to want to make it stick out.

"Where's your libelous stuff?" says I to Tommy.

"Right there," he says and he pointed to some stuff set two columns wide in the middle of the front page. It was marked "editorial."

This editorial went on to say that the murder of Willie Morehouse was a foul crime. The murderer, it said, should be hunted down and given his just dues. The opinion was set forth that Abner Morehouse had done quite right in offering a reward of $10,000. No sum would be too great if the slayer was brought to the bar of justice.

Then the editorial turned itself on Doc Oldham. I seen at once where the libelous stuff come in. Why, that editorial pretty nigh accused Doc Oldham of having killed Willie his own self!

After reading it careful-like, I sat staring ahead of me for a while. Then I looked up at Tommy who was lighting a cigarette in his cupped hands.

"Where is Royal now?" I says.

Tommy looked all around. Then he grinned wider.

"Not among those present," he says.

"Well, you run along and let me think," says I.

"Can I quote you as saying that you will look into this Oldham matter?" Tommy asks.

"That's what Royal sent you down here for, is it?" I says.

"I didn't say he sent me."

"Well," says I, "if Royal has got his foot in it, I may as well get mine in. I guess we will just shoot it all. Yes, you can quote me as saying that I will look into this Oldham matter."

He was off like a dog after a rabbit.

"Your judgment is offside, Royal," says I to myself, getting up and walking in front of the jail door. "It has been turned by your dislike of this Oldham person. However, I will look into the matter."

I went over to the cell and passed the paper in to Mike. He lifted his head, looked at it, grabbed it, sat down and begun to read it, moving his lips like readers like him do. Finally he let the paper fall and sat staring through the bars.

THE reason why I thought Royal was shooting in the air was because there didn't seem to be no motive for Oldham killing Willie. I have read about many, many murders and I never heard tell of one where there wasn't a motive of some sort. Common sense would tell a man that, anyway. A murderer has got to be jealous or he has got to be after money or out for revenge or some darned thing before he takes human life. The lowest crook that ever was don't go around shooting promiscuous.

And there wasn't a thing in sight to show why Oldham should have wanted to get Willie out of the way. Why, he had examined Willie for life insurance. If Willie said a good word for him, it would help him in his practice. And he needed help. It looked to me like Royal had let his dislike for Oldham get the better of him.

Just then I become aware that I would have to eat soon. My stomach was getting emptier and emptier.

I was just about to leave when I heard a car stop out in front of the hall. In a minute who comes busting around the corner of the jail but Doc Oldham his own self! I stood and waited for him. He come up to me, panting.

"I understand you've got Mike Moore locked up," says he.

"That's as good a diagnosis as you ever made, doc," I says.

"I want to see him," says he.

"Come right in," I invites him, and I led the way.

Mike was still sitting, staring. I told him there was some one to see him.

"Don't want to see nobody," he says, not looking our way.

"Will you step outside, sir?" says Oldham to me.

Before I could answer, Mike raises his head like he

has got a charge of electricity. He stares at Oldham for a few seconds and then he comes to the bars, and grabs two of them with his hands.

"Oldham?" he says. "A-a-gh, Oldham!"

"Hush, hush," says Oldham. "Don't get excited, Mike, my friend. I just dropped in to see what I could do for you. *Will* you step outside, Mr. Tom Hill?"

"I will not," says I.

"Why not?"

"Because you want me to too bad," says I.

"I wish to talk to Mr. Moore," he states.

"Mr. Moore is in my custody," says I, sharp. "I'll have to take whatever he says into my custody, too. If you want to talk to him, shoot your wad."

"You cannot hold this man incommunicado," says Oldham.

"YOU talk like the Spanish-American war," says I. "I ain't holding him—er—that way. You can talk. He can talk. You are seeing him. He is seeing you. Matters are as free and open as an armistice."

"How you sicken me!" says he.

"Ain't we got fun, Oldham?" says I, recalling what a traveling man had sprung one night at the hotel.

"You positively will not let me see this man alone?" he demands.

"There ain't nothing positiver in town that I know of," says I.

He give me a glare that was like to set my clothes on fire.

"Mike," he says, "keep a stiff upper lip. That is your game. Keep a stiff upper lip. This big duffer has nothing on you."

I'm big, the Lord only knows, in spite of off-and-on dieting, and maybe I am a duffer, but I wasn't going to let this here Oldham stick a link and coupling pin in them two words and slam 'em into my face. I took him by his left ear and piloted him out into the open.

"I've a notion to give you a ride with the toe of my boot," says I.

"Assault and battery," says he. "Let go my ear."

I let go, but I give the ear a twist as I done so. The doc let out a screech.

"Have you seen the morning paper?" says I.

"The morning paper isn't in from the city yet," he says, spiteful.

"Been looking for it, have you?" says I. "Well, I ain't speaking of the morning paper from the city. I'm speaking of the morning paper published right here in this man's town."

"You—er——" says he, gulping down whatever the word was he was going to cast at me. "There is no morning paper in this town. Selden's is the only paper and that is published in the afternoon."

"He got out an early morning extra," says I. "It's a humdinger."

I GOT the paper from Mike and handed it to Oldham and his hands begun to tremble as he took it.

"Just let that editorial on the front page jump out and bite you," I suggests.

Seemed like the editorial didn't jump out and bite him. It leaped and got him by the throat and hung on like a bull pup. He turned red, white, and blue, and I don't know but what there was a touch of green, too. I never seen so many colors go chasing themselves acrost the same human countenance. It was like a rainbow on parade.

"How do you like that?" I says.

"It is dastardly," he says. "I'll make Royal Selden pay for this. I'll sue him in a court of law."

I stood there staring at him till he looked up at me.

"Why don't you shoot him in the heart with an automatic pistol?" I says.

The colors all faded. He was just white—and pretty limp.

"You scoundrel!" he says.

I reached for his ear again, but he dodged and stumbled away from me.

"I'll make you and your friend Selden pay for what you are doing," is his threat. He begun backing away toward the road where his car was standing.

"Did you have a call up in that neighborhood last night, doc?" I asks. "Where did you park your car? Was you at the scene of the shooting at the time it occurred or at about the time? Was you, doc?"

"Errand of mercy," he kind of shrieks. "Errand of mercy, you big lummox!"

I let him go and I went in to the phone to tell Morton what had happened. He listened and then he says:

"We're just going in with another edition, Mr. Tom Hill," he says. "Look out for the yellow box car."

"Yellow box car?" says I. "What yellow box car?"

"Type," says he. "The greatest invention of man, I calls it."

Chapter XI—A Straight Tip

BY this time I was too dog-goned hungry to go home and cook myself some food, so I decided to go up to the restaurant. Just as I finished the last of my meal, a boy comes running in with a bundle of Royal's papers under his arm.

"Second extra!" he yells. "All about the murder."

"Gosh," says I, "extras is coming as thick as potato bugs."

I had to keep abreast of the developments, however, as them was seen by Royal and I invested a nickel in a paper. Well, it was a disappointing extra. It give me too much publicity for one thing and for another it didn't play up the news—or leastways what I thought was the news. I had expected that there would be a big head saying Mike Moore had been arrested. Instead of that Mike drawed only a little head down at the bottom of the page. The big type was devoted to the fact that Mr. Tom Hill would investigate Doctor Oldham's connection with the case.

I stuffed the paper into my pocket and went back to the town hall, taking a couple of sandwiches and a pail of coffee along for Mike. Mike just about swallowed the sandwiches whole and poured the coffee down like his throat was a rainspout.

"Make you feel better, Mike?" I says.

He wiped his mouth on the back of his hand. I pushed the paper in to him. He looked over the new stuff.

"When do I get out of here?" he asks.

"When the grand jury sets you free and I don't think it will do that," says I. "There is a good deal of circumstantial evidence against you, Mike. You better come clean to me. How about it, Mike?" says I, soft. "What you got to say for yourself?"

"Nothing, Mr. Tom Hill," he says, in a smart-Alecky manner. "Not a thing at all."

"That isn't much, is it?" I says, and I got up and left him.

I was standing outside, smoking my after-breakfast pipe when I see somebody coming down the street. He was swinging along as slow and easy as you please, like a man enjoying the morning air. I was sure it was Royal Selden, but I knew it couldn't be, for Royal wasn't going

to show himself to his enemies, I didn't believe. Then I was sure it was Royal, for there was no mistaking him as he come closer.

When he saw me, he give a wave of his hand and when he was close enough he sung out:

"Howdy, Mr. Tom Hill."

I kept on smoking till he was so close to me that I could speak in a low voice:

"You danged chump," says I, "what do you mean by showing up where I am, right here in the shadow of the jail, too? Don't you know that I've got to arrest you?"

"Have you seen the warrant that's out for me, Mr. Tom Hill?" he asks, pleasant.

"I haven't," I snorted, "but I know it's out. I can't go too far, Royal Selden. It would be altogether too raw for me to let you come here and chin with me and walk away again. Murder is a serious matter. If I did nothing more, I'd have to detain you till I phoned to Brower. Why didn't you keep away?"

"Because," says he, "I have come to give myself up."

"You want to go behind the bars, do you?" I says.

"You have only one cell, haven't you, Mr. Tom Hill?" he asks.

"Yes," says I, "and Mike Moore is in it. I hope you'll enjoy being cellmates with Mike."

"The very thing I'm looking for," he states.

I LOOKED into his eyes. He had been jaunty enough, but I see that his eyes was kind of hard and cold. His face looked older than it had any time I'd seen him in the past, I noticed.

"Playing a hunch again, are you, Royal?" says I.

"Mebbeso," he says.

"Uh-huh," I says. "Well, where you been?"

"Right at my newspaper shop," he answers. "I knew you wouldn't look very hard for me and I judged Brower wouldn't come there. He wouldn't think I had the gall to get out a paper while he was looking for me. But I did." He smiled kind of grim.

"Two papers, in fact," says I. "I didn't think much of the last one."

"No?" says he. "You expected I'd do the obvious thing and play up Mike's arrest, eh? Say, tell me everything about your arresting Mike. I've kind of overlooked a bet with him so far, I think."

"I guess you have," says I, and adds: "I haven't."

"Not in the way you think," he says. "Shoot, Mr. Tom Hill."

I told him all there was to tell about Mike's arrest.

"I was just wondering what the details were," he says, kind of musing. "They are better than I hoped they would be. Well, usher me in alongside Mike, Mr. Tom Hill."

"If you insist," I says.

"If I didn't insist, you would," he laughs.

WE went inside and I unlocked the cell door. Mike looked up as Royal passed through the door.

"Oh, you," says Mike, insulting.

"Yes, sir," says Royal. "We're cellmates, Mike. Both accused of the same murder."

"I think you done it," Mike blurts out.

"And I don't think you did," says Royal.

Mike, like everybody else, knowed that Royal was a kidder, and he give him a look to see if he was kidding now. Well, Royal wasn't kidding. His eyes bored into Mike's so cold and hard, like a steel drill, that Mike looked away.

"Can't you meet the gaze of an honest man, Mike?" Royal says.

"You lemme alone," Mike bleats.

"I'll do that," Royal says.

He turned around to me, where I was standing just outside the bars.

"Mr. Tom Hill," he says, "I want to put a riddle up to you. See if you can guess its answer."

"I ain't very good at riddles," I says, "but go ahead. I'll do my best."

"Mr. Tom Hill," says Royal, "if you were a man—"

"Ain't I?" I says.

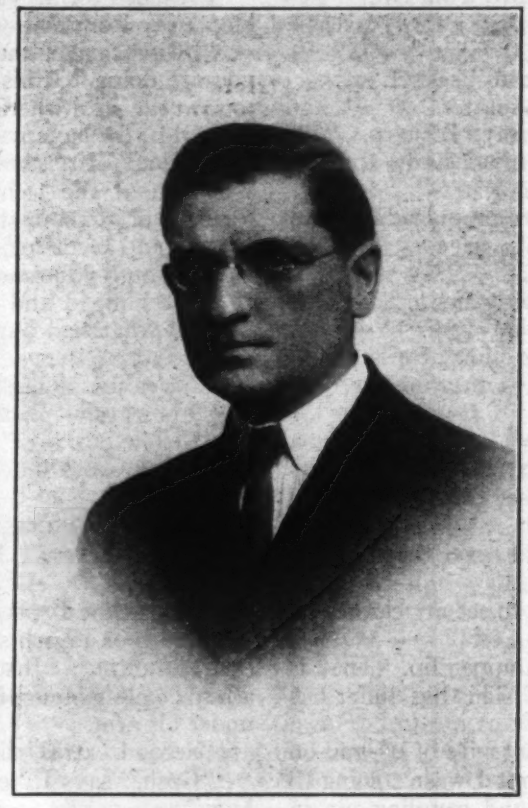
"One of the best," he says, "but listen: If you were a man and had an only son and you were praying to God that that only son would change his ways and that only son was shot to death in the night, what is one of the things you would do as soon as you learned of the murder?"

"Try to find the man that killed my son," says I, sober.

"In a large way that's the answer," says Royal. "But what would you do, in a specific way, to find the murderer? What is one of the first things you would do?"

"Notify me," I says.

[*Continued on page 114*]



Meet Charles W. Sanders

AT THE age of twelve a messenger boy; at fourteen the youngest general office telegrapher in the United States; and today a graduate of the newspaper game and a successful author of popular fiction.

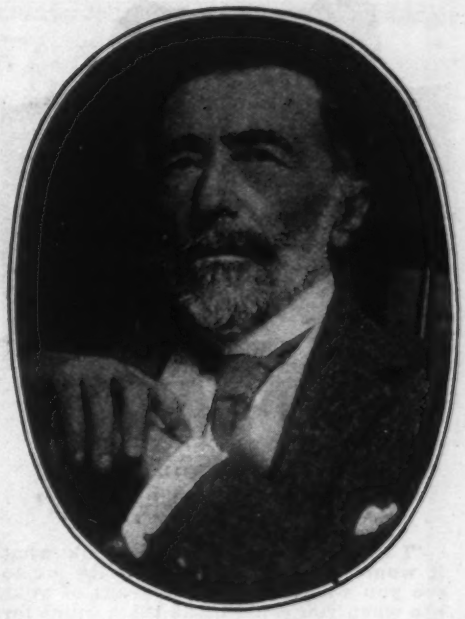
Thus is summed up the story of the author of "TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD."

Mr. Sanders was born in Port Huron, Michigan, of a family of Great Lakes sailors, but at the death of his father the Sanders home was transferred to Cleveland. The boy's nine years there with the Nickle Plate Railroad were followed by a break into the newspaper field and a rapid rise from reporter to various editorships on three Cleveland papers.

A lifelong ambition was realized when he felt free to resign his newspaper work and turn to fiction for a vocation. Since then his output has been about a million words and McCLURE'S votes for "TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD" as the best of the lot.

"How I envy those who are reading him for the first time!"

The romantic story of Joseph Conrad, a Polish sailor who could not even speak English until past twenty—yet now acclaimed by other writers themselves as "the greatest living master of English fiction."



SOMEWHERE Conrad himself has told his story. When he was a little boy in Poland he once put his finger on a map and said: "I shall go there!" He had pointed to the Congo, in deepest Africa. And years later he went to the Congo. He had a longing for the sea, this sensitive lad, child of an inland race. He made his way to Marseilles and shipped as a cabin-boy on a sailing vessel. For twenty-five years thereafter the open sea was his home. . . . There is no space here to tell the amazing narrative of his life, except one extraordinary part of it.

Until he was past twenty, he had never spoken a word of English. Nor did he write a story until he was over thirty. Yet to-day this former impressionable little Polish cabin-boy is acclaimed—not merely by the public, but by other writers themselves—as *the foremost living English novelist.*

Read, in the panel at the right, what other authors say about this great master. These, as you can see, are men of distinction, who weigh their words. And all over the world, tens of thousands of Conrad lovers echo their seemingly uncontrollable praise.

Here, Surely, Is Genius!

What magic is there in Conrad to account for this unexampled enthusiasm? If you have not read Conrad, it is impossible to tell you. His books, as one critic says, are quite indescribable.

Every one finds in them something different to love and admire.

In his clear, free style, he is reminiscent of a great Frenchman like de Maupassant; in his insight into the tragic human emotions he is as discerning as Dostoyevsky. He is as subtle as Henry James in his artistry; yet the life he depicts—the life mostly of outcasts, wanderers, and adventurers in the farthest places of the earth—is as glamorous with Romance as anything Kipling ever wrote. And all over his works lies the brooding majesty of the ocean—or the mystic beauty of the isles of the South Sea! It is an astonishing combination of gifts.

No one ever reads only *one* book of Conrad. Once they start, they get the "Conrad fever." For no other living writer has there been such a spontaneous demand. Conrad's publishers, accordingly, are now offering ten of his greatest novels—at a special low price. This set includes: *The Rescue; Youth; Chance; Victory; Typhoon; Lord Jim; Almayer's Folly; The Arrow of Gold; An Outcast of the Islands; The Shadow Line.*

After you have read the estimates of Conrad by his fellow-craftsmen, given here, can you afford *not* to have on your shelves the works and life of a man who can inspire enthusiasm such as this?

John Galsworthy says:
"Probably the only writing of the last twelve years that will enrich the English language to any extent."

H. G. Wells says:
"One of my claims to distinction is that I wrote the first long appreciation of Conrad's works."

Sir Hugh Clifford says:
"His books, I say it without fear of contradiction, have no counterpart in the entire range of English literature."

Gouverneur Morris says:
"Those who haven't read him are not well-read. As for those who are engaged in reading him for the first time, how I envy them!"

James Huneker says:
"The only man in England to-day who belongs to the immortal company of Meredith, Hardy, and Henry James."

Rex Beach says:
"I consider him the greatest living author in the English language."

Joseph Hergesheimer says:
"In all his novels there is a harmony of tone absolutely orchestral in effect."

—and enough additional words of praise, similar to these, could be added, to fill this issue of *McClure's Magazine.*

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Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

[*Continued from page* 112]

And I wasn't prepared for the laugh that got out of Royal.

"What would you do, Mike?" says Royal.

"I ain't got no son," Mike mumbles.

"You have a daughter," Royal snaps. "What would you do if she was murdered?"

"Oh, I ain't no good at riddles," Mike says.

I had been turning over in my mind what I would do and now I got a notion of what Royal was driving at.

"Do you mean what would I do if I was as rich as Abner Morehouse?" I says.

"You're getting hot, Mr. Tom Hill," Royal says. "Yes, what would you do if you were as rich as Morehouse?"

"Offer a good big reward," says I.

"WHAT would any rich man do?" says Royal.

"Offer a good big reward," says I. "They never fail to do it."

"You've never seen them fail, have you, Mr. Tom Hill?" Royal asks, eager. "In all the murders you've read about, you've never seen a rich man fail to offer a big reward if some one he loved was murdered, have you?"

"For a fact, never," says I.

It was a fact, too. Upstairs I had bundles of papers from all over the country and most of them was headed by that word "reward."

"That, Mr. Tom Hill," says Royal, "is the hunch I've been playing."

I opened my mouth to speak, but just then a newsboy come to the door with the "third extra." I bought one, of course.

One of them box-car headlines jumped out at me.

"Royal Selden surrenders," it read.

"Tarnation, Royal," says I. "How do you do it? How could this paper get off the press in the time that has elapsed since you give yourself up?"

"Oh," said Royal, "as editor of that sheet I knew Selden was going to give himself up. I had a straight tip." And he laughs. Then, very slow, he turns around to Mike.

"Mike," he says, in a low voice, "I was at the state capital once when a man was put to death in the electric chair. He was a man who had been convicted almost altogether on circumstantial evidence. To the last he protested his innocence, but they killed him in the chair nevertheless. It wasn't a pretty sight, Mike. He lost his nerve at the last and they had to carry him to that awful chair. I'll tell you about it. We are fellow prisoners and we will have to do something to pass away the time."

Mike turns back and forth on the bunk, looks at Royal, looks away, wets his lips, wrings his hands till the knuckles cracks.

"You lemme alone," he says.

Royal goes over to the bunk and sits down by Mike.

"It was like this," he says, and he starts off in a low, kind of a ghostly sort of a tone.

But before he got very far there was the sound of a car outside. I went to the door.

"Visitors, Royal," says I over my shoulder. "A flock of them."

"Show 'em in, Mr. Tom Hill," says Royal. "But you're going to let me entertain Mike with this story, ain't you?"

"Bet your life," says I.

The visitors come up to the door.

Them visitors were Brower, Oldham, Morehouse, Morton and Doc Hickey. They had come in Morehouse's car.

"Well, Selden," says Brower, seeing Royal, "behind the bars at last, are you?"

Royal give a large wave of his hand.

"Just temporary, Mr. Mayor," he says. "Just temporary. It's not a bad experience."

"Take to it like a duck to water, don't you?" Brower sneers.

"And the duck can swim out most any time he likes," Royal says.

"What have you got those two men locked up for?" Doc Oldham asks. "I demand that they be separated at once."

"The only way I could separate them would be to let one of them go free," says I. "I ain't got but the one cell."

"Let Mike Moore go free, then," Oldham says. "It's nonsense to hold him since Selden has given himself up. His giving himself up is a practical admission of guilt."

"That's right," Brower chimes in. "Let Moore out of there, Hill."

"Not yet," says I. "Royal is going to tell Mike a story."

"If you don't let Moore out of there, I will," Brower declares.

"Go right ahead," says I.

"Give me the key to that cell," he orders.

"Who? Me?" says I. "Well, I would be a fine jailer if I give up my keys to the first customer that come and asked for them."

"As mayor of this town, I demand those keys."

"And, as mayor of this town, you don't get them keys."

He made a move as if he was going to hop me, but he didn't come. He just made sounds in his throat.

"Don't let him bluff you, Brower," says Oldham.

"Shut up," says Brower, taking his mad out on his old side-kicker.

I give Oldham a good, hard look. There was something about the man that puzzled me. His face had lines in it that I had never noticed before and his eyes had a kind of a glazed look.

"Selden," he calls out, thin and high, "I am going to sue you for libel for what you put in your dirty paper about me. I am going to sue you for ten thousand dollars."

"Ten thousand dollars is a sum that seems to stick in your neck, isn't it?" Royal shoots back at him.

Oldham turned white.

"What do you mean by that?" he screeches.

"NOTHING," says Royal. "Not a thing. Go on and sue me and be damned to you! Only don't interrupt me while I tell Mike this story."

"You'll tell Moore nothing," Brower yells, and he goes up and shakes the door of the cell. "You leave that man alone."

"Walk right in and make me let him alone." Royal invites. "Now, Mike, it was like this."

Neither Brower nor Oldham could stop him, for Mike was looking at Royal with his eyes popping.

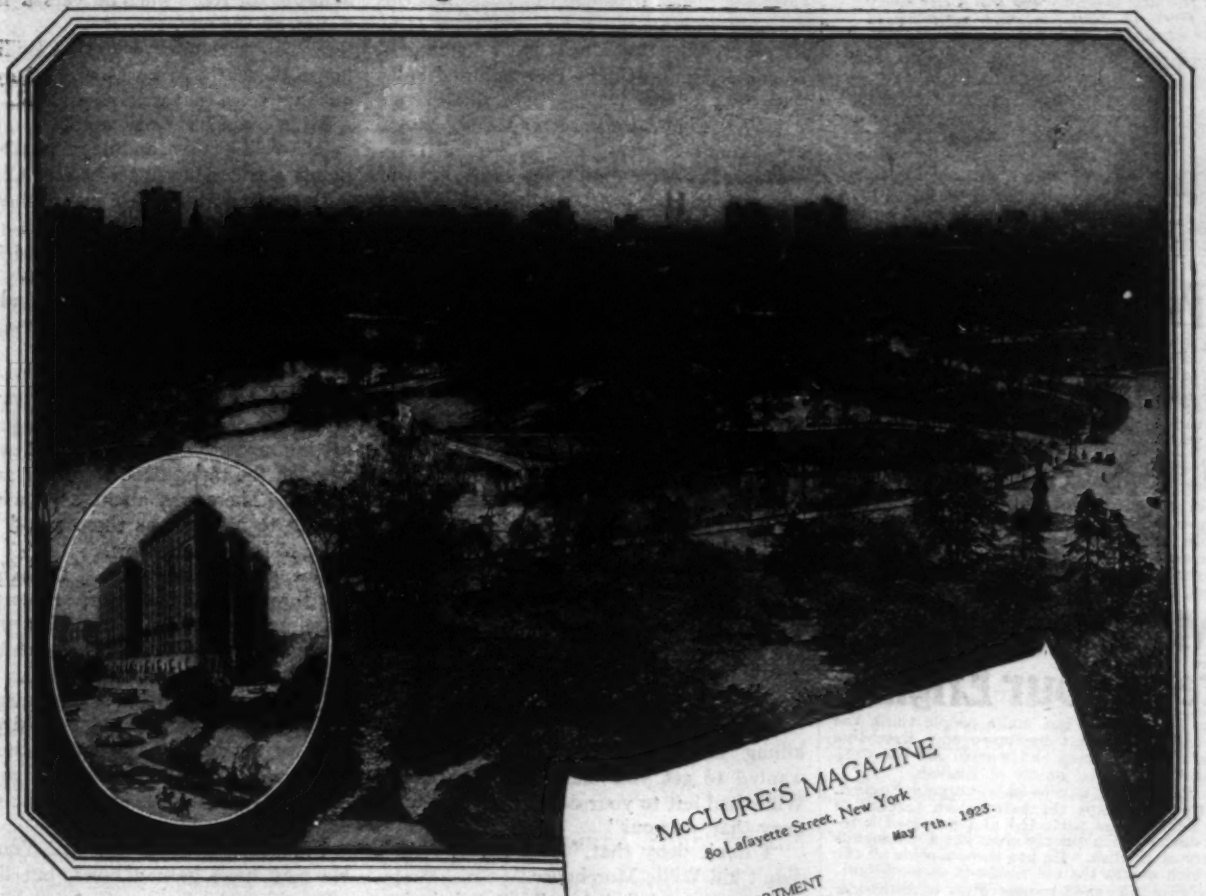
They all pressed up to the bars and Royal began his story in a low voice. I reckon Doc Hickey has sharper ears than the rest of us, even Oldham, because of doc's having to listen to folks' hearts and lungs so much. Just as Royal got under way, I seen the doc look at me. He nodded backward and I looked at the jail door. Alice Moore had

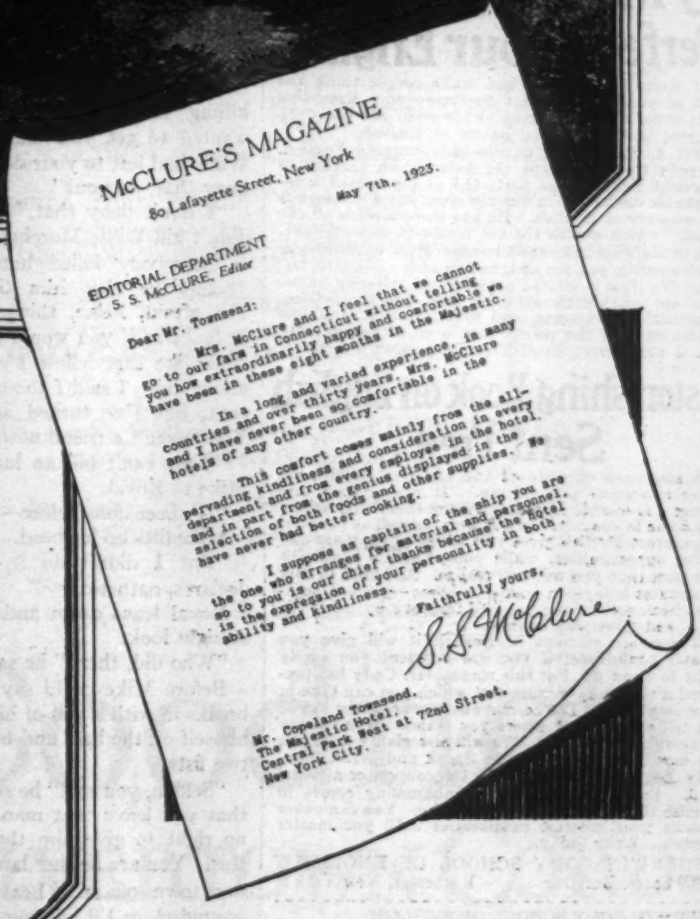
[*Continued on page* 116]

Panorama of Central Park and Fifth Avenue viewed from

HOTEL MAJESTIC

CENTRAL PARK WEST AT 72nd ST — NEW YORK CITY





McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

80 Lafayette Street, New York

May 7th, 1923.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
S. S. McCLURE, *Editor*

Dear Mr. Townsend:

Mrs. McClure and I feel that we cannot go to our farm in Connecticut without telling you how extraordinarily happy and comfortable we have been in these eight months in the Majestic.

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I suppose as captain of the ship you are the one who arranges for material and personnel, so to you is our chief thanks because the hotel is the expression of your personality in both ability and kindliness.

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Little Mistakes In English Make Others Judge You Unfairly

Does your English reveal your lack of education or does it prove that you are a person of culture and refinement? English is the one weapon you must use every day. Here is how you can improve it almost at once.

SHERWIN CODY

You are sized up every day by what you say and write. The words you use, how you use them; your spelling, grammar, punctuation—these tell the measure of your ability, your experience, your breeding, more clearly than anything else. Your English says to all the world, "This is what I am!"

How Poor English Hurts You

English is the advertisement of your ability. Your language determines your position in the social and business scale. Charming personality, fine clothes, wonderful appearance, count for little if handicapped by imperfect or "sloppy" English.

People will think you are lacking in education and culture if you spell incorrectly such common words as "business," "abbreviate," etc.; if you say "between you and I" instead of "between you and me;" if you use "who" for "whom" and "shall" for "will." What can you expect people to think if you don't know when to use one or two "c's" or "m's" or "r's," or when to use "ei" or "ie," or if you say "hosPITable" when you should say "HOSpitable." Fairly or unfairly, everybody everywhere judges you the same way. Poor English is an unnecessary handicap.

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Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

[*Continued from page* 114]

come there and was standing on the sill, looking in. I gave her an encouraging nod and she kept on standing there, her head bent forward, trying to catch what Royal was saying to her father.

Well, Royal's story was too bloodcurdling for anything. It told how a scared man dies in the electric chair and that ain't no good thing to put into print. It is better left to the imagination. Royal got down to where they was going to shoot the juice into this cringing man in the chair, and then Mike lets out a roar that would have done credit to one of Hank Miller's thoroughbred bulls, seeing red for the first time in his life.

"Why, what's the matter, Mike?" Royal asks, smooth.

Danged if Mike didn't flop right down on his knees in front of Royal, and grab both of Royal's hands.

"Stop it," Mike whispers, seeming to have expended the best of his voice in that one shout. "Stop it, man, I say! Do you want to drive me crazy? I didn't shoot Willie Morehouse. I swear I didn't! I was going to. I bought that gun to do it, but I didn't do it. I figured my daughter would get that insurance and the rest—and now she says she won't take it, and I didn't kill Willie Morehouse, anyway."

He bends down his head on one of Royal's knees and there ain't no sound in that jail for a while except for the sobbing of that wretched old buck.

Then Royal says in a low voice, but a voice that seemed awful plain and loud in the silence of that jail:

"You must have killed him, Mike. You were down in that neighborhood with your new gun, you know. You had a motive for killing him—a reason, you know. You wanted to get your hands on that money Willie had left to your daughter. You don't deny that, do you?"

"I don't deny that," says Mike, "but I didn't kill Willie Morehouse."

"Somebody killed him," Royal insists. "Somebody shot him through the heart. I'm afraid, Mike, things are against you. It looks as if you would make a trip to the chair like that fellow I've been telling you about did. I said I thought you were innocent, but I've turned against you, Mike. You haven't a friend now."

"They can't kill an innocent man," says Mike to Royal.

"It's been done before—often," Royal says.

Mike lifts up his head.

"But I didn't do it, Mr. Selden," he declares, pathetic.

Royal leans down and stabs him with a straight look.

"Who did, then?" he says, louder.

Before Mike could say anything Oldham breaks in with a yell of his own. He throws himself on the bars and beats them with his two fists.

"Selden, you cur!" he screeches. "I insist that you leave that man alone. You have no right to give him the third degree like this. You are neither lawyer nor prosecutor nor town official. Leave him alone, you scoundrel, or I'll kill you first chance I get."

"Would he kill me, Mike?" Royal says, soft as a cat purring after a good wash. "Is he a killer, Mike, this man Oldham who was down there when Willie Morehouse was murdered? *Is* he a killer, Mike?"

Well, I give Royal the red button for knowing how to play his cards. I don't think Mike would ever have got out the words that would have accused Oldham. But he still had power to nod and he did that most emphatic. Then Royal takes him by the arms and lifts him to his feet and whirls him around so that he can face Oldham, who by now has quit his beating of the bars and is hanging onto them like a prize fighter hangs to the ropes when he gets a first-class wallop on the jaw.

"Where is the man who shot Willie Morehouse to death, Mike Moore?" Royal yells out in a voice that was quite awful.

Mike could bleat one word.

"There!" he says, and he raises a hand and points a trembling finger at Doc Oldham.

Doc says nothing. He just pushes himself away from them bars, dodges between Brower and Morehouse, who was standing nigh him, and makes for the door.

"Get him, Mr. Tom Hill!" Royal yells.

CHAPTER XII

I AM stronger than I am spry. In a Fourth of July race I would be just about getting under way when Royal would be crossing the tape. Doc was little and light-footed. There was about as much chance for me to nab him as there would be for a duck to follow a swallow.

But don't worry none. Oldham didn't get through that jail door. Alice was still standing there. Up comes her arm and in the sunlight that was streaming through the door, a pistol glittered in her hand.

"Get back, Oldham," she says, and I declare I thought of them fine old plays we used to see in the city before the movies run 'em out, for Alice was just as good a heroine as ever I see. Steady she was, and cool.

Oldham gets back, all right. You betcha. He may have been a killer, but like most killers he had a horror of getting killed. He got back and still back till he landed in my welcoming arms. There was no escape for him then. I had the bracelets on him in a jiffy. He staggers over to the far wall and leans against it.

"Lies," he moans. "All lies."

Alice comes over to me. She was kind of white and shaky now, since she had done the deed.

"Here, Mr. Tom Hill, take this," she says, and holds the pistol out to me.

I took the gun and give it a look.

"Why, Miss Alice," says I, "it ain't loaded."

"Isn't it?" she says, with what they call a kind of a wan smile.

Oldham takes note of the fact that he has been captured at the point of a bulletless gun.

"You coward!" he whispers at Alice.

I thought that was funny, him getting the reverse English on it, but I didn't say nothing to him. What was the use?

Alice walks up to the bars then.

"Come now, father," she says. "Tell us all about it."

"It was like this, Alice," says Moore. "I thought if Morehouse was dead, you would get all that money. You know how we've always wanted money."

"Not I," says Alice, hard.

"Me," says Mike. "Well, I bought this

gun and went down there and waited for Morehouse to come along in his car. I was going to kill him somehow or another. I didn't figure that it would take a good gunman to get him in his car. I was—my mind was kind of hot and whirly.

"Well, I got down there by coming to the roadside through them trees between that road and the Martin Road. I sat a while listening for the sound of a car. Pretty soon I seen a light. It come for just a minute and then went away. It wasn't bright enough for an auto light and I was scared. Of course nobody could be looking for me yet, but I thought somebody was. I wasn't thinking very straight, I guess. So I climbed up the bank and looked out on the road. Doc Oldham was standing there. He was twisting his neck to look this way and that way and all around. Pretty soon that light come again and I seen it was from a flashlight in the doc's hand. He was clicking the light on and off every now and then like he was nervous or wanted to make sure that the light would work. He had a gun in his other hand."

"Was his car in sight?" Royal asks.

"NO. It was on the Martin Road, just around the corner. I seen him get into it later. Well, I crouched down there for about fifteen minutes and Oldham stood there in the shadow of a big tree. Pretty soon we heard a car coming. It wasn't coming so very fast. I seen Oldham lift his head and listen. The car was coming at such a speed that I guess Oldham didn't think it was Willie's. He expected Willie to come hell-bent like Willie always done, I reckon. H'ever, he stepped out into the road. I seen then that it was Willie's car—that long, low car ain't like no other car in town. I heard Oldham give a kind of a 'a-ah' and I knowed he had recognized the car, too.

"He stepped right out into the middle of the road, after snapping on his light. He held the light on the ground till the car was almost up to him. Then he flung up the light so it shined right into Morehouse's face. I seen Morehouse throw up his hand and swerve the car off to the other side of the road. I guess he thought he was going to run into something. Just at that minute Oldham throwed up his hand and there was a shot. I seen Morehouse fall down over the wheel. I knowed he had got it good, for he couldn't steer the car no more. It kept on going, come to the edge of the bank, seemed to kind of hang there for a minute, and then went right over and banged down at the bottom, glass breaking and everything. Oldham started to run down the road. That brought him right opposite me. I put my gun on him and called soft to him to stop. We exchanged words like bullets popping out of one of these pistols. He said I could have all the money I could get out of it and he would keep his mouth shut. He said he would get his in another way. He run on then and I scooted for home. And that's all I can tell you."

"And then," says Royal, "he ran to his car at the head of the Martin Road?"

"Yes, as I run I seen him get into it."

"Well, Mr. Royal Selden, what was Doctor Oldham's motive for killing the boy?" Brower sneers. "Or did he just kill him because he is a congenital killer?"

"He was going to accuse me and he did get me accused," says Royal. "He stole

[*Continued on page* 118]

"BEST IN THE LONG RUN"

SILVERTOWN is the one word that means "cord tire" to the world. No need to add "cord" or "tire." SILVERTOWN means both. But now it is also the one word that means "One Quality Only." For SILVERTOWN is the product of a one-quality policy. We center thought, skill, and care on it, and make it the perfection of cord tires.

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Ten Thousand Dollars Reward

[*Continued from page* 117]

my pistol and threw it there by the side of the road. He knew I would be running on the Martin Road about the time he shot Willie. He knew I was on that road for a long time every night. Everybody knew it. His motive was to collect the ten thousand dollars reward that Mr. Morehouse offered."

Brower snorted like a horse with the heaves.

"He killed a man to collect something that wasn't offered till after the killing took place!" Brower says. "That is just about as logical as the things you put in that dirty sheet of yours."

"Mr. Morehouse," says Royal, "what was one of the first thoughts you had after you learned that your son had been murdered?"

"To find his slayer, of course," says Abner.

"And what was your thought about means of finding the slayer?"

"To offer a substantial reward."

"Exactly," Royal says. "And you offered five thousand dollars—or spoke of offering that amount."

"And," says Abner, with a look at Oldham, for he was a father, I guess, before he was anything else, "Oldham suggested that I make it ten thousand, the while he argued that you were not the kind of a man to murder another. Shrewd you were, Oldham. You dog! You knew I would offer a big reward and you threw suspicion on Royal Selden in the expectation that the reward would go to you."

"He knew that I had said I would break Willie's back in certain circumstances," Royal says. "He knew I would be in the vicinity of the place where Willie was murdered. He stole my pistol and threw it near the scene of the murder. I shouldn't like to face a jury with all that circumstantial evidence against me."

"I don't believe Oldham is guilty," Brower sneers again.

"LOOK at him, then," says Royal in a sudden, loud voice.

We all looked at him. For just a second or two Oldham swayed on his feet, his face ghastly. Then he went down to the concrete floor. He went down hard because on account of the handcuffs on him he couldn't catch himself. He laid there quivering and shivering for a minute, and then he was still.

Doc Hickey went over to him and bent down.

"Dying," says doc.

He ripped open Oldham's clothes above his heart and pressed his hand there.

"Dead," he says.

"What killed him so quick?" says I.

"Oh, cyanide of potassium, probably," doc says. "A little of that goes a long ways and takes hardly any time at all. You have a confession here, Brower."

Brower stands for a minute, looking at Oldham. Then he goes out of the jail door. He had had enough, I reckon.

"I'll have the undertaker come for him, Mr. Tom Hill," Doc Hickey says. "Has he any relatives that you know about?"

"None that I ever heard of," says I. "I'll look in on his housekeeper and see what she knows."

"You go and get up your story for another extra, Tommy," Royal says. "Take all the space you want. Throw yourself on it, now," he added.

Tommy got out of there on loose feet. I noticed he wasn't grinning and he had even forgot to light a cigarette.

"Oldham was in hard financial circumstances," Morehouse says, speaking like he felt it was up to him to add more motives as a kind of an apology to Royal. "He had been to the bank to see me about a loan. I couldn't help him. He had no security to offer. He had been in some kind of trouble in the place he came from and I judged that his need was desperate. Well, a bank can't loan money on desperate needs."

Then he went out, too, leaving me and Alice and Royal and old Mike alone—with what there was of Oldham.

I unlocked the cell door. Mike bolts out.

"Can I go?" he asks.

"I SUPPOSE you can," I says. "Brower didn't say hold you. There's nothing to hold you for that I know of. There won't be no trial of the murderer of Willie Morehouse. I hope this will be a lesson to you, Mike Moore."

"Lesson?" Mike bleats. "Lesson? Oh, my Gawd!" And he went through the outside door like an electric current was chasing him already.

We three didn't say nothing till the undertaker come and bore Oldham away. Then I looked at Royal, still in the cell.

"You must like your lodging, Mr. Selden," says I. "Why in heck don't you come out of there?"

Royal looks at Alice. Alice looks at him.

"Here I stay," says Royal, firm. "Here I stay till I rot unless—unless——"

Alice moves closer to the open door.

"Unless I say I will marry you, Royal?" she says.

"About like that," says Royal.

"Before you promise him, Miss Alice," says I, "bear in mind that you got ten thousand dollars coming to you."

"I?" she says, flabbergasted.

"The reward," says I. "It is yours. If it hadn't been for you, your father wouldn't have been arrested. Then he wouldn't have confessed. We wouldn't have got the goods on Oldham."

"Oh, I couldn't take it," she says.

"Mebbe you couldn't take it for ferreting out the murderer of Willie Morehouse," says I. "But you might take it for setting Royal Selden free. You can buy an interest in Royal's business. Then he can get that new press he has been talking about. I guess a down payment of ten thousand would put it in his shop."

She didn't say nothing more. She was looking at Royal.

"What I can't understand," says Royal, right there in front of me like folks always do, thinking I don't count, "is why you promised to marry Willie Morehouse."

Alice took hold of a bar and kind of swayed up to it.

"The big reason was that I was afraid of myself, Royal," she says, and tears come into her eyes. "I didn't want you to marry a girl out of what you might call the slums. I knew what people would say. Father said people were talking of nominating you for mayor next time against Brower. Wouldn't I make a fine wife for the mayor—old Mike Moore's daughter? I thought it best to take an irrevocable step—to put a gulf which we

could not cross between you and me. I—I didn't trust myself while I was free. Every time I saw you I—I was afraid. And—and Willie Morehouse was a good boy, in a way. He was making himself unhappy about me and making his father unhappy. I thought I could do a little good in the world."

She begun to cry with long sobs now. I don't know much about women. I don't reckon anybody does, but what she said had a kind of a womanish sound to me. I started to go out. I didn't know whether things was all off or all on with them. But I wanted to give Royal a chance whilst Alice was in that tearful state. I shouldn't think, there was no better state to find a woman in.

"Hey, Mr. Tom Hill," Royal calls after me. "Come back here. I want you to bring a bunch of furniture down here and fix up this cell. I'm going to make this my headquarters from now on—get out my newspaper from here and everything. These quarters will be good enough for a man that is never going to marry. And I will break your back if you ever repeat a word of what you've heard here!"

He was the maddest ever I see him. Alice kind of shrank away from him. I don't guess she ever see him like that before.

"BETTER go easy on that back-breaking talk, young feller," says I. "You used that kind of language before and it might have got you into serious trouble."

"It goes," says Royal, with a glare like a wildcat, though I ain't never seen a wildcat except in a circus. "It goes twice for you and for anybody that gossips about this."

"Well," says I, kind of testy myself, "you can't turn this jail into a lodging house. You'll have to find quarters elsewhere."

"Put me out," says Royal.

I wanted a couple of cups of coffee of my own brew. Mebbe I don't make good coffee, but I make the kind I like.

"I'll be back after a bit," says I, moving toward the door, "and when I come back don't you get it into your noodle that I can't put you out or that I won't. If I have to, I can throw you through that wall."

"Oh, you!" he cries.

I left. He was too unreasonable, being off his trolley a little right then.

I got my coffee and felt some better. I was on my way back to the jail when I see Royal and Alice on the other side of the street, arms hooked right there in the daytime. Royal looks up and sees me. He gives a large, loose wave of his hand.

"Howdy, Mr. Tom Hill," he says.

You'd have thought I was his long-lost brother, come back after an absence of nineteen or twenty years at sea.

"What I said kind of got to you, did it, Mr. Royal Selden?" says I.

"What was it you said, Mr. Tom Hill?" he asks, like he was puzzled.

Then he seemed to think of something he had forgot to tell Alice and he bent toward her and begun to talk a blue streak.

I went on to the jail. It would have took an Eyetalian bomb to attract Royal's interest then, and I didn't have no bomb.

Well, Alice is Mrs. Editor now and Mrs. Mayor and Mrs. about everything else that Royal has anything to do with. Right away after they was married she seemed to take hold of this, that, and the other thing, quite handy like.

THE END

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Strayed But Not Forgotten

[*Continued from page 42*]

The ring cleared for the big contest. Foley came first to his corner and divested himself of his dressing gown. Bandages had been examined in the dressing room, and gloves tossed for, so he was already gauntleted. He looked in magnificent fettle, and excited considerable enthusiasm. Then the "Stiffener" gentleman entered the ring with his cohorts. Foley, talking earnestly to Thrippy, did not notice his advent, but I did and recognized him on the instant as the captious critic of Foley's first Metropolitan fight! The gentleman who knew him and all his relations, and his ox and his ass, etc., etc.

Well, even with the dirty work they were going to pull, they'd have to look up the post-office savings book in the morning, or I was no judge. I didn't know what sort of a hand they carried, but I *did* know that the trump card had cashed my check for five hundred at the bank that morning. A piece of knowledge from which I obtained profound satisfaction.

"WELL," said I to Foley, watching him closely, but sedulously avoiding any note of mystery, "he looks an easy-enough job. Look at it!"

He did; then he sat heavily in his seat, gaping at his opponent with an expression of utter perplexity. Once he opened his mouth to speak, then closed it again. He looked like a man viewing some sudden apparition, but there was no sign of *quit* about him—or bolt. I glanced at Barrington and Friend: they were leaning forward gazing at him with anxious intentness.

Fortunately, at that moment the referee entered the ring and called them together for orders. You could have heard a pin drop. I went to my seat, my eyes glued upon Foley, watching for the slightest sign of break-away. But he was still staring, as if fascinated, at his opponent, who replied with a menacing glare from his baleful, bloodshot eyes. Foley looked like a man in a trance. I prayed inwardly that he wasn't wool-gathering—at least, not enough to let this Brady person get him off the gong.

Suddenly it clanged! My heart leaped to my throat and back to its usual abiding place with a thud!

Brady crouched and moved toward Foley, who dropped back, still with that look of suspended mental animation on his face. Brady swung, missing by an inch or fraction thereof, and at that second came a startling interruption that made me jump in my seat and use bad language, openly and audibly and fluently.

It was the voice of a woman, and it came out of the crowd, shrill and menacing. Pearla—the accursed jade was here! She had *sold* me!

But not so. She was here, right enough, but she was screaming at Mr. "Stiffener" Brady. She scarified him; lavered burning vitriolic venom over him—vituperation so complete and unanswerable that the huge audience sat in petrified admiration. There was *class* to Pearla as a female Nemesis; but as to what she was mouthing about—search *me!*

The expression on Mr. Brady's face beggared description: and Foley looked like the

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original Lost Chord. But suddenly, as Pearla was apparently making for the ring, he awoke to the consciousness that he was upon earth, and that before him—with his hair on end and a look of frozen terror upon his face—stood one "Stiffener" Brady.

"It's about time I got a whang at you!" yelled Foley, suddenly. "Well, then, mind that!"

The "Forget-me-not" took Mr. Brady on the point of the jaw at, I believe, the exact moment that Pearla succeeded in clambering through the ropes. Like a log, Mr. Brady fell upon her, flattening her to earth and temporarily rendering her *hors de combat*. The referee, though a shaken man, did his duty and tolled the fatal ten over them. As he pointed his good right hand at Foley in token of victory, that warrior, heedless of the plaudits of the multitude, leaped over the ropes and sped for the dressing room. In three minutes we were out of the building. Wild horses wouldn't have held him. Guilty conscience, thought I, but I nobly seconded his frantic efforts at hasty retirement. I'd had enough for one night myself.

In the motor he faced me anxiously, dull care upon his every feature.

"Y' don't think she'll follow me?" he grunted uneasily.

"You know best whether she has any good reason to follow you!" I answered sternly. "Who is the poor woman, anyway?" I asked him.

"His missus," said Foley shortly. "His—not mine."

"Then why," snapped I, determined to point a strong moral here, "why did you fly from her as if she were the plague?"

"So she is," returned Mr. Foley promptly, "and worse. She used to be *my* wife, till I got a divorce. Now she's up to him," he explained.

"Do you mean she has no call upon you—moral—or—or any other?" I stammered, utterly at sea.

"*Her!* Not on your life!"

He leaned toward me confidentially and placed a hand on my knee.

"She changed her mind once," he whispered earnestly, "and bolted with *him*. Good luck to him! How do I know she ain't changed it again, and wants to come back to *me?* You know what these janes are—*stickers* when they get hold of an idea. I ain't havin' any! And she's clever, is Pearla! My *oath!* It's a smart guy that'll beat *her* for much, my word it is, and don't you forget it."

HE leaned back with a deep breath, and I surveyed him thoughtfully. Foley wasn't such a fool as I'd taken him to be. A sudden thought came into my mind at that moment.

"Did she—did she do you for any money?" I inquired casually.

"All I'd got," responded that Solomon curtly. "So she would you, if you'd anything to do with her."

I made no reply. I thought of my five hundred pounds and the twenty a week board money I'd allowed her—*to save Foley!* Perhaps I'd been luckier than I thought! I never did profess to know it *all!*

Anyhow, I was luckier than Barrington and Wheezy Joe. But I never made another killing with Foley. He disappeared like he came. I judge our Island Kingdom was not big enough, to his thinking, to hold him and Pearla.

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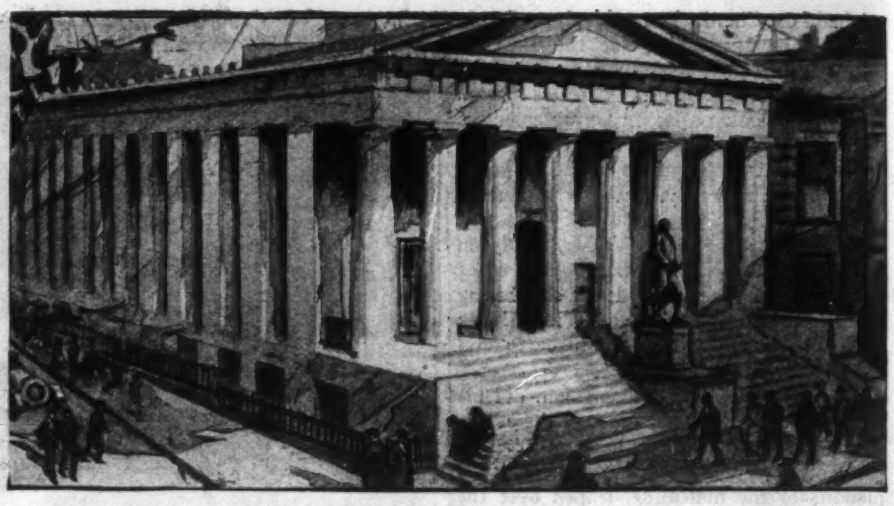

Common Stocks and Investment Holdings

By Franklin K. Sprague

IT is almost universally agreed that the measure of safety in investment holdings is to be calculated, not alone on the quality of the securities involved, but on diversity of investments as well. Briefly, it might be said to be an unfortunate placing of investments to have all of one's savings in a certain class of security or in one particular issue. Thus it is that in compiling a list of investments, a banker endeavors to select a group of securities covering a wide range of activity; and it is argued that the foundation of such investment should be built upon underlying securities of the highest type as, for instance, first mortgage bonds.

It is sometimes difficult to determine, however, in just what measure conservatism in investments should be tempered with the aim of obtaining a higher yield than so-called gilt-edge securities afford. Not infrequently I am asked whether this or that stock can be considered as an investment, and when this refers to common stocks the answer is generally "No." Preferred stocks of companies such as American Car & Foundry, Union Pacific, United States Steel and others of like calibre have a high investment rating, but common stocks offer a zone of danger even though they may be of high quality.

Such issues as American Car & Foundry common, General Electric common and even United States Steel common may rightly form a part of a well-diversified list of investments, provided the financial position of the investor is such as to warrant dabbling in the stock market. An investment of 100 shares, for instance, of United States Steel common stock, for a man who had $100,000 in gilt-edge securities, would not be a hazardous speculation. In other words, the financial status of the investor has to be his guide in considering whether he should buy a limited number of shares of common stock.

Ordinarily, however, the question of price is one to be primarily considered in assuming a commitment in the stock market. Prices of bonds are ruled by influences quite apart from those which govern stocks, and underlying securities of practically the same class will sell to yield approximately the same return. This is not so in the case of stocks for there is an inherent quality of speculation, to say nothing of market manipulation, which plays a part in market operation and which overcomes, to a certain extent, investment position.

Now and again it happens that inquiry is made with relation to such a security as Standard Oil of New Jersey or, for that matter, any one of several Standard Oil issues. It may be assumed that Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard of Indiana, Standard of New York, Atlantic Refining, and others of a similar standing have a far better investment position than is accorded generally to the shares of oil companies. Now, since Standard of New Jersey has at times sold to yield less than 3 per cent might not an investor purchase this security in the belief that it would furnish a high degree of safety? Might he not think that the low yield indicated lack of speculation?

SUCH an assumption is one of the dangers confronting an investor for he does not understand that the low yield with relation to many of the Standard Oil stocks does not represent investment quality alone. There is investment quality in the Standard Oils, but when they sell on a basis to yield lower than high-grade state and municipal bonds the low yield represents an intensification of speculation that is insidious. If the Standard Oils were to sell on a basis to yield, say, 5 per cent they would represent an investment on a plane with other high-grade stocks, but an increase in price to the point of bringing down yield represents the premium which many persons are willing to pay for prospective, but intangible distributions, such as, for instance, the stock dividend of not so long ago.

It is just such a speculation which the investor must avoid, for the losses may be decidedly heavy in price depreciation. It is therefore necessary that the question of price be considered, intimately, with relation to stocks, and the bearing of price on yield. It is not sufficient that the stock has an excellent asset position or book value, although it is important. It is necessary to consider earnings, immediate and in prospect, as a means for the fulfillment of dividends, and it is necessary to be in a position to watch and judge the course of events, for stocks are more sensitive to business changes than are bonds.

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Generally speaking, stocks are called a business man's investment and there is no reason why stocks of high grade should not absorb a portion of the funds for investment of a person who is in a position to discriminate as to the points which have been mentioned.

It is partly because common stocks are so difficult to weigh for investment qualities that the rule is generally promulgated that common stocks should be taboo to the average investor. It might even be said that few common stocks have any investment quality whatsoever. However, there can be no overlooking the fact that there are certain qualifications for stocks, in a time of unsettlement, which are apart from those accruing to bonds.

In a period of what is termed inflation, fixed income securities, such as bonds, tend to depreciate in price as money rates rise, while on the other hand stocks are in a position to take advantage of the turn in affairs through increased dividends, such as developed in 1919 and through the war period. This is not said to disparage in any way the investment position of bonds, but merely to emphasize that under certain circumstances investment in stocks tends to be a balancing influence in an extended list of securities.

Questions and Answers

Q. How do you consider Haitian bonds as an investment and do they rank as high as the Norway issues? As I understand it the Government of the United States is back of the loan to Haiti and is looking after the collection of revenues during the life of the bond.

A. Although the Republic of Haiti 6 per cent bonds are not guaranteed by the United States Government, the provisions of the loan and the relation between this country and Haiti are such as to give the bonds a good investment rating, not far from the Norway 6s and 8s. When an additional $5,000,000 of bonds, issued as another series of this same loan, have been floated, this dollar loan will be a first charge on the internal revenues and customs duties of the Republic.

The collection and appropriation of these revenues are provided for under the terms of a treaty running until 1936. The President of the United States nominates, and the President of Haiti appoints, a general receiver who collects the customs duties and a financial adviser who supervises the administration of Haiti's finances. There is a supplemental provision to the effect that this arrangement shall be binding until the maturity of this bond issue. Furthermore, the President of the United States has control over any increase in the public debt of Haiti or any reduction of customs duties. Under these conditions an investor is justified in placing some part of his funds in the Haiti 6 per cent bonds.

Q. Kindly favor the writer with any information that you may have on Tuxpam Star Oil Corporation. Whether this stock is of any value, whether there is a market for it, and general information that you think would be of interest.

A. Stock of the Tuxpam Star Oil Corporation has little, if any, value. Last December 4,000 shares were sold at auction for the lump sum of $2 and no transactions have been recorded since that time. In October, 1920, stockholders of this company were offered stock of the New Tuxpam Oil Corporation in exchange for their own stock, in ratio of two shares of Tuxpam Star for one share of New Tuxpam. This exchange right expired in January, 1923. If you have any of the stock, write off a complete loss and charge it to experience.

[*Continued on page* 124]

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Tenth Edition

This Financial Booklet is intended for McClure readers who wish general information about financial, insurance and investment subjects. Many readers have written that it is invaluable to them. Requests for this booklet during the past year have assumed such proportions that the Financial Department is obliged to charge a nominal sum of 35 cents a copy to partially cover the cost of printing and mailing. This book will enable you to avoid many of the pitfalls that a new investor is apt to encounter.

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- Six Per Cent and Safety
- Bonds, Stocks and Mortgages
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Questions and Answers

[*Continued from page* 123]

Q. I am holding shares of Standard Oil of New Jersey common, also hold shares of Cosden & Company. What do you think of the advisability of continuing to hold these two stocks? I am interested in Radio Corporation of America, preferred stock. Would you advise investing $1,000 in the common stock? Would appreciate your rating on the following common stocks: Pennsylvania R. R. and Standard Oil of Indiana. How do you rate the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company?

A. If you bought Standard Oil of New Jersey common and Cosden common at materially higher prices, it would seem inadvisable to accept a loss through a sale at the current market level. We believe that Radio Corporation preferred will move gradually into the investment class, aided by the justifiable belief that dividends will be inaugurated early in 1924. This stock should be held. The dividend prospects of the common are dependent upon so many unknown business factors that this stock cannot be bought except with the understanding that it contains a speculative risk.

Standard Oil of Indiana stock is entitled to much the same rating as Standard of New Jersey, New York and California and Atlantic Refining common. Pennsylvania Railroad stock lost some part of its investment standing when the dividend rate was temporarily reduced two years ago. Of course, the conditions which necessitated that action by the directors were abnormal in the extreme and may not be repeated for another generation.

But the fact remains that a precedent has been set and Pennsylvania, or any other railroad common stock, for that matter, should not be taken except with the realization that it contains a measure of business hazard. We believe, however, that a certain percentage of stocks like Pennsylvania should be included in every well-balanced investment list. The Penn Mutual Life is one of the old-line life insurance companies—a sound institution.

Q. You have expressed an opinion to the effect that Empire Gas & Fuel 1st Mortgage and Refunding 7½s, 1937 bonds were entitled to rank about halfway between investment and speculation. Regarding the new offer of $10,000,000 1st and Refunding Convertible 7 per cent Gold Bonds, Series "B," due May 1, 1926 at 99½, I wish to know whether this issue has anything to do with the soundness of the 7½s, 1937, Series "C" and what relation is a Series "A" bond to a Series "C." I know that in stocks there are preferred 6 and 7 per cent Class "A," such as the Rock Island Railroad. I hold $1,000 in Class "A," 7 per cent.

A. The fact that the Empire Gas and Fuel has issued $10,000,000 Series "B" first and refunding 7 per cent bonds certainly does not add to the value of the Series "A" bonds. Both these series are parts of the same mortgage, so that there is no difference as far as security is concerned. In stating on previous occasions that the 7½s belong somewhere between the investment and speculation class, we gave full weight to the maturity date, 1937.

The main point is that the properties securing this issue of bonds are located in a relatively small area and there is lacking an assurance that on maturity these properties will have enough productive capacity to assure a value equaling the amount of bonds then outstanding. No one knows whether the company's oil and natural gas wells will outlive the Series "A" bonds. The Series "B" bonds command a higher price and can be sold on a lower yield basis because there is a greater assurance that adequate

production will continue for three years instead of fourteen.

As to your second subject, there is no direct basis for comparing New York Dock preferred stock with Standard Gas & Electric preferred or Bethlehem Steel common. We would much rather have the Standard Gas and would be inclined to toss a coin if asked to choose between Bethlehem Steel common and Dock preferred.

Q. Please express your opinion of the forty-year external gold bonds of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Am I correct in believing that the interest on these bonds has been promptly met heretofore, and that interest money is deposited in New York promptly for each payment, in advance? Are these bonds more secure because they have the pledge of certain state monopolies, in addition to being a direct obligation of the Kingdom? Is it a fact that Serbia has never defaulted on the interest or principal of an external national bond issue?

A. We have no hesitancy in stating that the Jugo-Slavia—Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes—8s are the weakest foreign bonds floated in this country during the post-war period of financing, and the least deserving of consideration as an investment. You are correct in stating that interest has been met promptly here, but remember that this issue of bonds was floated less than a year ago.

Without a specific pledge of revenues from certain state monopolies this loan would be impossible, and to this extent it might be proper to say that the pledge makes them more secure. A mere obligation of this newly formed kingdom is a political risk that no banker would assume. We can find no facts to controvert the claim that Serbia has never defaulted in any of its external obligations.

[All inquiries receive prompt and careful attention. Correspondence is treated as confidential and is answered by Mail. Questions relating to subjects of general interest will be published each month. Address, Financial Editor McCLURE'S *Magazine, 80 Lafayette St., New York City.]*

Investment Literature

[If you do not care to order these booklets direct we shall be glad to have them sent to you. Kindly order by Number.]

1. S. W. Straus & Company, 565 Fifth Avenue, New York City, will be glad to send on request their new booklet "Charting Hidden Treasure." This booklet contains tables that will help you build an income.
2. The G. L. Miller Bond & Mortgage Company of Miami, Florida, are publishers of "The Ideal Investment," a financial book which describes the character of first mortgage real estate bonds, and indicates how high-grade bonds which are secured by real estate are protected against loss. A copy of this book will be mailed free and without obligation, upon request.
3. "How to Select Safe Bonds" is a booklet that has recently been published by George M. Forman & Company, 105 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois. Send for this booklet.
4. "How to Build an Independent Income," a booklet, illustrated with charts and pictures, which shows how both large and small investors have much to gain by the compounding of 6½% and 7% interest on first mortgage investments in Washington, D. C. For copies write the F. H. Smith Company, Smith Bldg., 815 Fifteenth St., Washington, D. C.

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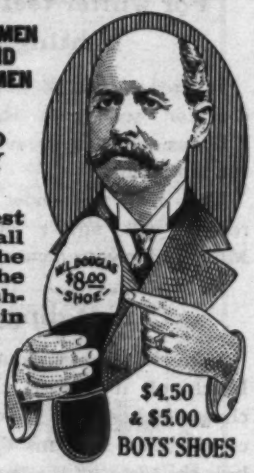

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The Third Round

[*Continued from page* 21]

First, Algy, though a fool and partially demented, was not a liar. Therefore, the story he had just listened to was true. Second, the bloke who had turned a deep magenta, though possibly a liar, was certainly not a fool. If he had made his money in diamonds, he couldn't be—at any rate, as far as diamonds were concerned. Third, since he had offered Professor Goodman no less than a quarter of a million to suppress the secret, he had evidently got a jolt in a tender spot. Fourth, here was the great query: Just how tender was that spot?

Hugh had spoken glibly about markets to Algy, but he realized only too well that he actually knew nothing about diamonds. He recalled dimly that they were found in mines near Kimberley: beyond that, his knowledge of the subject was limited to the diamond engagement ring he had bought for Phyllis. And, having reached that point in his deliberations, he decided that before coming to any definite conclusion it would be well to take some expert advice on the matter.

He rose and pressed the bell: Toby Sinclair was the very man. In the intervals of backing losers, that bright particular star graced a city firm with his presence—a firm which he knew dealt in precious stones on the wholesale side.

"Denny," he said, as his servant came in, "ring up Mr. Sinclair in the city and ask him to have lunch with me at the club today. Tell him it's very important."

FIVE minutes later he was strolling in the same direction as that taken by Algy, but at a more leisurely pace. His face was still contorted with thought: periodically he stopped abruptly and glared into space. How big was the jolt? Was it really big enough to justify the fears he had expressed to Algy, or was he exaggerating things in his own mind?

He ruminated on the perplexing point over his cocktail in the Regency: he was still ruminating as he passed into St. James' Square on the way to the club. To reach it he had to pass the doors of Professor Goodman's club, and as he walked slowly on the cause of all his profound mental activity hove into sight—the worthy professor himself. Drummond paused: it seemed to him that something had happened. For the professor was muttering wildly to himself, while periodically he shook his fist menacingly in the air.

"Morning, professor," he remarked affably. "Been stung by a bee, or what?"

The professor stopped abruptly and stared at him dazedly.

"It's you, Drummond, is it?" he said. "I've just received a most scandalous letter—perfectly scandalous. A threat, sir—an anonymous threat. Read it."

He held out a common-looking envelope which he handed to Drummond. But that worthy only took it mechanically: his eyes—shrewd and thoughtful—were looking over the professor's shoulder. A man had come hurriedly around King Street, only to pause with equal suddenness, and stare into an area below.

"I suppose, professor," he remarked quietly, still holding the letter in his hand, "that you know you're being followed, don't you?"

[*To be continued in the October* McCLURE'S]

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The Irish Linnet

[*Continued from page* 28]

"We got more dough comin' our way than one of us can pack. I'll tell the world that this is one time a charm worked. Mary Coulter just naturally sung that yellow hammer under the wire. Who says fairy tales don't come true?"

Just as the saddling bell for the next race was ringing, the Get-away Kid, his clothes padded and wadded with bills until he resembled a huge toy balloon, dropped from a run into a walk and stumbled up to the side of a low, gray roadster, parked by the three-quarters pole. One glance sufficed to tell him that something was wrong.

Wan-eyed, a look of apprehension marring her face, the Irish linnet sat silently huddled in the seat, one hand clutching her throat. The Get-away Kid disgorged bundle after bundle of bank notes on the floor of the car.

"That'll pay off the mortgage on the old homestead," he encouraged. Then, taking command of the situation, Get-away Kid slipped behind the wheel. "The hotel, lady?" he asked.

The Irish linnet nodded silently.

An hour afterward the Get-away Kid was wandering disconsolately around the room while Mary Coulter was undergoing an exhaustive examination by a famous specialist. As he cleared his throat preparatory to delivering his verdict, the Get-away Kid stiffened in his tracks.

"I do not think your voice is gone permanently, Miss Coulter. The singing in the open air, especially on such a day as this, has caused a temporary paralysis of the vocal chords. Several months' rest and care will undoubtedly restore it."

An insistent knock on the door interrupted at this point. Mary Coulter nodded to Get-away.

"Come in," growled that worthy, trying to hide under assumed gruffness his relief at the doctor's decision.

The door opened and the owner of Rordigan Prince burst into the room. There was a slight flurry. The Get-away Kid and the doctor—rank outsiders now—left the room.

"Some clinch, doc, some clinch!" exulted Get-away, as he moved down the hall. "We better clear outa here before they tap us for a weddin' present."

A Red Fiasco

[*Continued from page* 34]

I slouched inside the room, hands in my pockets, eyes to the floor. I was shoved over in front of a desk at which sat a Russian officer, busily writing. I looked up as he finished his writing and his eyes met mine.

It was my Russian officer! It was the man with whom I had shared my last ruble at Vologda, and who had befriended me in turn. I was so surprised I could not speak. I only stood and stared, with my mouth hanging wide open. A look of surprise crossed his face, but only for an instant. When he spoke his voice was calm—even cold.

"Well," he said, "what's the matter with you?"

I thought that even this friend had deserted me in my extremity and so I decided to hide the truth from him, too.

"Why," I said, "I heard that a friend of

[*Continued on page* 128]

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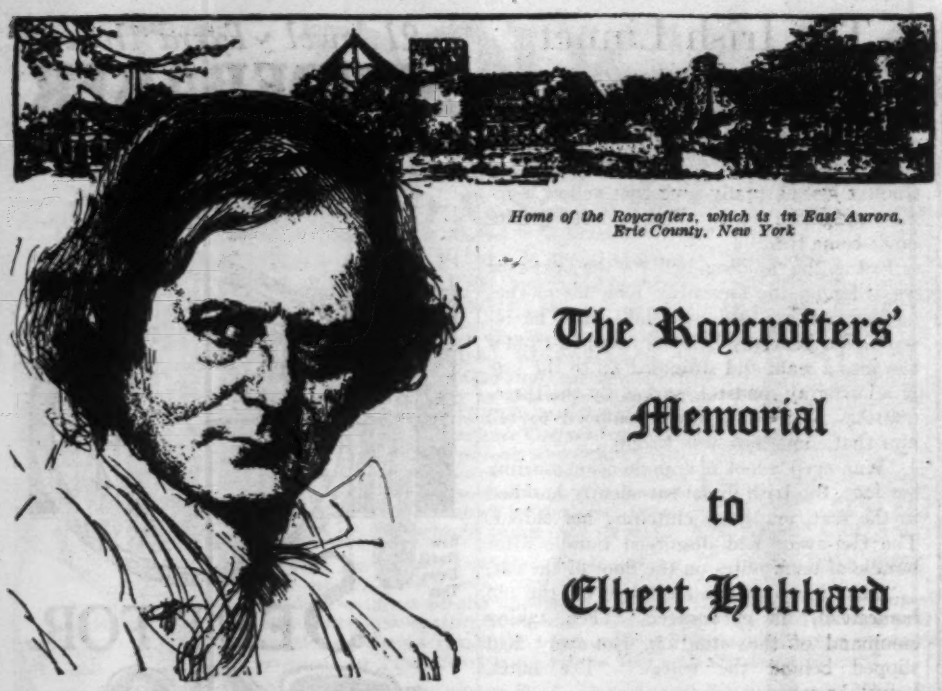

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A Red Fiasco

[*Continued from page* 127]

mine had come in on the *Eastern Star*, and when I went down to see him, I was arrested. What for, I do not know."

He spoke to one of the soldiers in Russian.

"This is bad," he said. "You are charged with being a counter-revolutionist."

Counter-revolutionist! My knees went weak under me, for I knew the penalty was death, and that swift and sure.

"But give me your papers," said the officer, "and I will see what I can do for you."

I handed him the only two papers I had and he left the room with them. In a few minutes he returned and handed them to me.

"You are free," he said.

"Free!" I cried. "Do you mean I can go any place I want?"

"ANY place in *Russia*," he said, with just a trace of a smile.

I walked through the door, as though in a trance. The officer followed me into the hall, and when the door had closed behind us, he grasped my hands and shook them with the joy he had so successfully concealed before the others. I told him what had happened, and that I was determined to try again to get aboard the *Eastern Star*.

"I wish you luck," he said. "But I don't believe you can make it. And, remember, next time I may not be able to help."

I gave him heartfelt thanks and set out at once in search of the American Relief. I had just enough money left to pay street car fare to their offices. There I went from one official to another but, as before, there was nothing they could do. Always there was the suspicion that I had been deported from the States as a radical, and even though I may have convinced them that this was not the case, they could not risk complications with the Soviet Government. Finally, however, one of the officials gave me a letter to one of his men, stationed at the dock, asking him to help me.

I had no money now and had to walk the five miles to the dock, having had nothing to eat for two days. However, I arrived there late in the afternoon. The American Relief man was inside the gates and I was outside, and I knew that if I put in an appearance I would be at once arrested. I worked my way along the wall and found a niche not far from the gate. I hid there, not knowing what to do next, but fully determined to make one last desperate effort to get aboard the ship.

While I was standing in the niche in the wall, one of the sailors started through the gate with a carton of American cigarettes. No imports are allowed into Russia except through the Soviet Government, and the sailor with the bundle was stopped.

Here was my chance. I stepped out of my niche and walked boldly through the gate, without even being seen. Once inside the gate my impulse was to make a dash for cover, but my better sense told me to *walk*.

Some large packing cases, containing Ford cars were being unloaded from the vessel and I walked over to these. Once among them I was safe for the moment. I had now lost all thought of trying to find the American Relief man. My one idea was to get aboard the vessel.

I noticed that the pile of packing cases hid the side of the vessel from the gate at one point, although it was in plain view of the sentry at the gangplank. There were a

couple of men on the dock to loose the ropes after the packing cases were lowered and a gang of stevedores on the deck to make them fast. I decided finally to try to grab the rope as the winch hauled it up over the side, and then to make one wild dash for a hiding place.

Accordingly, when one of the packing cases had been deposited on the dock, the ropes unfastened, and the winch started hoisting, I dashed for the rope, grabbed it and swung clear of the dock. The winch operator must have seen me for he dropped me nicely on the deck in the midst of the Russian stevedores.

I did not stop to introduce myself, and they were too astonished to act, so I scrambled to my feet and dashed through the first door I saw. I found myself in the crew's quarters. Little Jimmy Jonas had been standing on the deck and he saw me land. He dashed in the door behind me, just in time to hear me cry:

"Hide me, fellows. Hide me, quick!"

"Come on!" cried Jimmy, and he dashed ahead of me, and led me forward. Quickly he lifted a trapdoor and shoved me inside.

"Over in the corner you'll find a pile of life preservers," he said. "Crawl under them and wait until I come for you."

About three hours later—it seemed a lifetime—Jonas lifted the trapdoor and threw down to me a suit of sailor's jumpers.

"Put these on," he said, "and follow me across the deck, but stay at a distance."

I followed his directions and he led me back to the crew's quarters. Apparently the crew was prepared to help me, for there was a consultation on as to where I could be safely hidden. It was finally decided that I should go down to the engine room and hide in the shaft alley—a long narrow passage through which ran the propeller shaft from the engines to the keel.

One of the oilers took me below and showed me how to get into the shaft alley. But that place seemed entirely too roomy for safety. I noticed at one end of the alley a narrow space that seemed to lead off under the floor of the boiler room. I went ahead and crawled through the hole. About four feet down my feet struck something solid and I found myself on top of a number of steam pipes, insulated with heavy asbestos, but very hot indeed. As I crawled along on these they sloped up to the floor of the boiler room, and finally I found myself wedged tightly between the steel floor and the pipes with my eye to a crack through which I could see a part of the boiler room.

I HAD just gained this position when I heard the gabble of Russian soldiers, coming down the boiler-room gangway. I saw one of them enter with a drawn pistol. He began talking to the chief engineer, in Russian, but the former pretended not to understand. Other soldiers came down and they searched every nook in the boiler room. One of the first places they looked was in the shaft alley!

At last, fortunately for me, they gave it up and left the ship.

Three hours later the ship dropped its pilot and the last Soviet guard at Kronstadt, and we sailed out of Russian waters. I came out of my hiding place, covered with dirt and spattered with grease from head to foot. The oiler took me to the bridge, and the captain watched me coming with a broad smile.

"Stowaway, sir," said the oiler.

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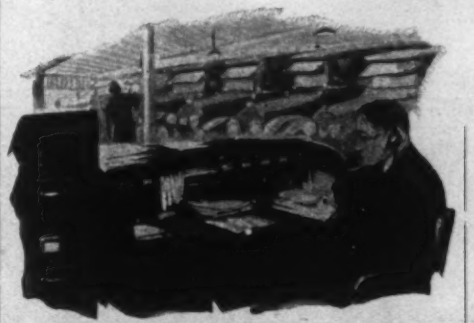

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